

STATE OF THE RESIDES

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PLEASANT COMPANIONS

FOR SPARE HOURS.

BOSTON: CROSBY, NICHOLS AND COMPANY.

No. 111 WASHINGTON STREET.

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Che Six Pleasant Companions.

I.

LITTLE FREDDY AND HIS FIDDLE. From the German of A. L. Grimm.

Translated by Madame de Chatelaine. With other Stories from the German.

Illustrated with Thirty Engravings.

II.

SADDLER MÜLLER'S WENDELL. By Mary Howitt. With other Tales. Illustrated with Twenty-five Engravings.

III.

LITTLE LIZZIE AND THE FAIRIES; AND SUNNY HAIR'S DREAM. By Dinah Maria Mulock. With other Tales. Illustrated with Twenty-four Engravings.

IV.

TONY THE SLEEPLESS. An Original Tale. By Madame de Chatelain. With other Stories. Illustrated with Twenty-seven Engravings.

V.

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BY

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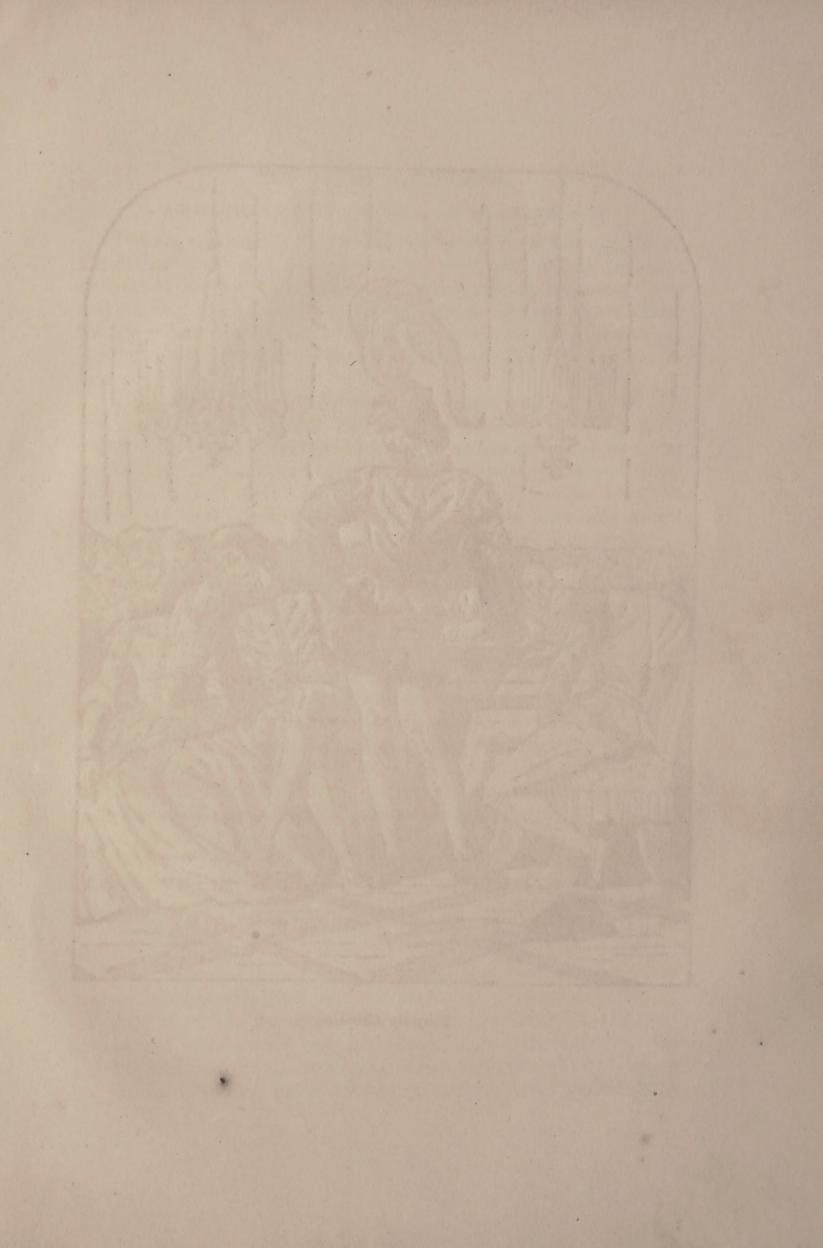
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Tony the Sleepless.

TONY THE SLEEPLESS.

AN ORIGINAL TALE, BY MADAME DE CHATELAIN.

THERE was once a huntsman who lived in a fine old forest, abounding in all sorts of game; so that what with selling the skins of some of the beasts he killed, and eating others, he managed to make a very fair livelihood. All day long he roamed about under the green leaves, and when night came he retired to a neat cottage, surrounded by a trim little garden that he cultivated in his leisure hours.

Tony had led this life for some years, and was known all over the district as the boldest huntsman and liveliest companion for many miles round, when one evening, as he was returning home by moonlight, his path was intercepted by a strange-looking figure, that was himself more like a moonbeam than a "proper man," so transparent and impalpable did he look, and so unusually bright were his eyes. Had it not been for a kind of pack that he carried on his shoulder, giving the comfortable assurance that he belonged to the corps of wandering pedlars, a stouter heart than Tony's might have been excused for a temporary flutter at the sight of such a phantom-like appearance, who however asked him, in quite a natural voice, whether he could shew him the way out of the forest. Tony answered that it would be easy enough to do so, but that as the next village was a considerable way off, and there were no inns thereabouts, he had better come home with him, and sleep under his roof, and not attempt to go any further till next morning.

All this Tony said partly from his inherent good nature and hospitable feelings, and partly—shall we confess it?—to bluster himself, as it were, into the conviction that there was nothing

unearthly about this singular visitant.

"Sleep!" repeated the stranger, while his eyes appeared to dilate, and his singular, discordant laugh, shook the very leaves of the oldest trees; "I don't think I'm likely to get any sleep, unless you'll sell me some: but I'll accept a night's lodging, and thank

you too."

Tony now concluded he was a harmless madman, who had got some strange crotchet into his head, and without any further ado he shewed him the way to his cottage, promising himself some amusement in drawing out his peculiarities. On reaching his humble dwelling, the stranger laid aside his pack, while Tony brought out all the materials for a substantial supper, accompanied by a

pitcher of beer, to which he invited his transparent-looking companion, with the heartiest welcome.

"And pray, friend," said Tony, as they sat down to their meal,

"what sort of goods do you hawk about?"

"All sorts of strange things," replied the pedlar, fixing his keen eyes upon his host. "My pack is like a pack of cards, containing

good and ill luck."

Tony laughed at this evasive answer, and without shewing further curiosity to penetrate his guest's secrets, let him run on to other subjects; keeping so little on the defensive himself, that after a scrambling, skirmishing sort of conversation, he had placed his whole biography at the disposal of his new friend by the time supper was over, without having received the slightest equivalent in exchange. For the stranger had such a fascinating way of talking of so many wonderful things that Tony had never heard of, that he would have been loath to interrupt him with any needless questions.

At length, however, it waxed late, and being accustomed to early hours, Tony could no longer resist the drowsiness that stole upon him; so he offered his bed to the stranger, and was about to lie down upon some skins in a corner, when the latter assured him that his bedtime was not yet come, and moreover, that he preferred spending the night on a chair. Tony therefore laid himself down, and had soon sunk into that deep sleep that hard exercise and a healthy constitution and healthy constitution.

healthy constitution can alone promote.

A third of the night had scarcely past, before he was roused by the stranger's voice, saying,

"Holla, master, it must be near upon morning by now!"

Tony opened his reluctant eyelids "Tush! man," cried he, "you're mistaking the moonlight for dawn; can't you let a body

sleep in peace?"

And suiting the action to the word, he turned round, and was presently snoring to his heart's content. The stranger fidgeted about on his chair, then got up and walked, then sat down and took patience for a while; but, by the time two-thirds of the night had worn away, he again called out to Tony that it must surely be morning.

Tony again opened his eyes unwillingly, and perceiving that there were no signs of dawn yet, and judging from his remissness that his usual hour for rising could not be come, was half provoked at this second disturbance, and answered, "Get up, and go whither

you please, but let other people sleep."

"Sleep!" muttered the stranger; "one would think sleep were

the only thing to be prized in the whole world!"

But the remark died away unheeded, for his host was proving the value he set upon it, by having quickly snatched back his treasure.

The stranger was therefore obliged to take patience till the first streaks of dawn really appeared in the sky, when he began to unbolt the door, rattle his chair, and make all kinds of noises to supply the place of words, in order to avoid the ungracious task of again reminding his host to be stirring. Tony, however, soon woke of himself, and springing blithely from his bed,—"Now I'm your man," said he, "and will roam all over the forest with you, if you like;—at least, when we've had our breakfast."

Then perceiving that the stranger looked neither fatigued nor rested by the night he had passed, and that his deep-sunk eyes flashed as restlessly as ever, he could not help observing, "You're an odd man to be so wakeful. Are you in such a hurry to be gone?"

The stranger shook his head negatively.

"If you're often as restless as to-night," continued Tony, "you'll wear your strength out; so now sit down, and make up for it by a good hearty meal."

"Oh!" replied the stranger, taking his seat at table, "it is all a matter of custom. I have spent the last eighteen months in this

same manner, and my health is none the worse for it."

Tony laid down his knife and stared at the stranger in amazement.

"What! without a wink of sleep?"

"Without a wink," repeated the stranger.

"Then you must be Old Nick himself!" cried Tony, starting to his feet, with a creeping sensation of horror, that he experienced

for the first time in his life.

"Sit down again, my fine fellow," said the pedlar, laughing at the fright he had occasioned; "and be assured that, whenever I find an opportunity of getting a year or two years' good sleep in exchange for my wares, I never let it slip. But more of this anon. Now answer a plain question—What makes you so very fond of sleep?"

"Why," said Tony, scarcely knowing how to reply to a question, embarrassing from its very simplicity, "why, when one's tired

by hunting all day, a man wants sleep, to be sure."

"But suppose you were rich, and only hunted for pleasure, and

had a fine palace, with vassals and servants, and could be entertained, night and day, with all sorts of rare devices—then would you mind about sleeping?"

"I suppose I should still feel sleepy when night came?" said

Tony.

"But if the want of sleep were prevented?" persisted the stranger.

"Then," said Tony, "it might be vastly pleasant to live double,

and enjoy one's self incessantly."

"Shall it be a bargain?" inquired the stranger. "Will you live in a fine house and become a prince, and sell me seven years' sleep?"

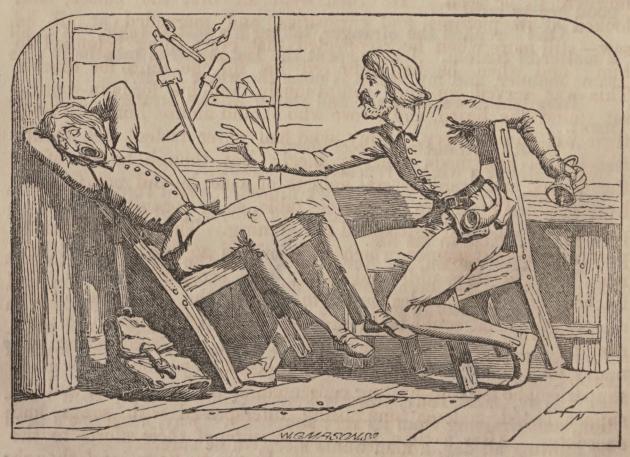
"But how can I do so?" asked the bewildered Tony.

"Leave that to me," replied the stranger. "Do you consent? Once—twice—thrice!"

"I will," chimed in Tony, led away by the splendid prospect

that opened before him.

The stranger then took out of his pack a small, richly-wrought silver bell, and handed it over to Tony, saying, "You can ring for whatever you want, and it will be yours di-



rectly. At the end of seven years, if you ring for me, we can

renew our bargain for seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, if you please."

"But," said Tony, prudently, "suppose I were to get tired of

never sleeping before the seven years are out?"

"You can ring for sleep on the last day of each year," replied the stranger; "but take heed that your palace will crumble away, never more to return."

These last words were pronounced in a sleepy voice by the stranger, who had already sunk back in his chair, and was soon

making the most of his purchase.

"A palace — a palace!" cried Tony, ringing away like mad.

The cottage immediately spread out and became a magnificent marble hall, with countless pillars, and this was but the entry to a princely building. The little garden grew and grew till it became at least equal in size and beauty to the far-famed gardens of the Boromean Isles, and the forest formed a noble boundary to the The palace was full of servants and lords-in-waiting, and every thing was on the most splendid scale. Tony looked round for the pedlar, in order to express his admiration, but he was nowhere to be seen. He then went all over the palace, and looked at its pictures and curiosities, and marvelled at all he saw—still more when he recollected that every thing belonged to him; and when he had admired his fill, he rang for dinner. This was served up very sumptuously, and his lords-in-waiting sat round the board, and strove who should amuse him most with their wit and drollery. Tony, who had never tasted such dainty fare in his life, made a hearty meal; but though he ate of all the dishes, and drank several goblets of wine, he did not feel the least inclined for a nap on leaving table, so he consulted his companions how he had best spend the evening. They advised him to play at different games, which each offered to teach his "Highness," for so they addressed him; and accordingly cards were fetched, and Tony endeavoured to acquire the rudiments of the easiest game that could be thought of. But after puzzling a good deal over it, he found it such insipid work that, recollecting how merry they had been at dinner, he proposed they should now go to supper. The lords-in-waiting consented, as in duty bound, and the supper lasted a long time, being interspersed with songs and anecdotes. After a time, however, in spite of their efforts to the contrary, the spirits of the guests began to flag; and though Tony kept occasionally goading them on, by calling out, "Come,

my lads, go on amusing me; no song no supper, you know!" Nature would assume her rights, and, by degrees, one lord-in-

waiting dropped fast asleep after another.

When his "Highness" found himself thus left alone, and as wakeful as ever, he began to think it vastly tiresome; and, after several vain endeavours to wake his suite to a sense of politeness, by pelting them with balls of bread, which he kept kneading between his fingers, he desired his valet to shew him to his room, thinking, from habit, that if he lay down on a bed he must, perforce, go to sleep. No such result, however, occurred; so, after tossing about for a couple of hours, he got up and dressed himself, and walked out into the forest to pass away the time. The night happened to prove rainy, and Tony, in his fine clothes and thin shoes, got wet to the skin, and returned home with a violent cold and stiff neck, which forced him to keep his bed for three days—a thing which had never happened to him in all his life, and which was rendered doubly irksome by his not being able to forget himself a moment in the blessings of sleep.

As soon as he had recovered, Tony thought the best way of amusing himself would be to take to his former occupation of hunting—only on a grander scale. So he rang for a pack of hounds and huntsmen, and sallied forth with all his retinue. But after hunting all day his lords-in-waiting were so tired that they fell asleep much earlier than usual, so Tony found himself thrown upon his own resources all the sooner. He then thought he would fill up the night by a torch-light hunt; but, on calling for his men, he was told they had all gone to bed, and that the dogs were

fast asleep in their kennels.

"Confound it!" cried Tony; "what makes them all so fond of

sleep? Is there nobody can keep awake like me?"

He forgot that the pedlar had asked him a similar question.

He then rang the bell for a fresh set of huntsmen and pack of hounds, and roamed over the forest all night, and did not come home till sunrise. In this manner he got through several days; but at last even his sturdy frame grew so tired that he was obliged to stay at home, at any rate during the nights. Then he rang for another set of lords-in-waiting, that they might relieve each other, and that somebody might always be with him to entertain him; though, even so, he found it very difficult to get them to keep up the ball, as the liveliest are apt to flag after exerting their powers during several consecutive hours.

"How shall I manage to pass away time?" thought Tony, one morning. "Do what I will there are four-and-twenty hours in the day. I have every thing at command, and don't know what to ask for."

Then he called his suite together, both the day suite and the night suite,—which he termed, more facetiously than correctly, reviewing his wardrobe,—and told them he would make the fortune of any one who would suggest something new to help to amuse him.

One of the lords then stepped forward and said, "Please, your Highness, I have at home five daughters, all young and beautiful. If I might be allowed to introduce them, their wit might help to entertain your Highness."

"Capital!" cried Tony; "I always liked the lasses. I'll marry one of them, and we'll have a ball. Go and fetch them directly."

While the lord went off to obey his commands Tony sent all the others to fetch either their sisters or cousins, or whatever female relations they might have; and then he rang for all that was necessary for a grand ball, as well as for a hundred damsels, with each her partner, all handsome and splendidly dressed, in order that it might not seem a mere family party.

There never was such a galaxy of beauty as appeared on that night at Tony's ball. But when the old lord came in with his five daughters, they were lovelier than any of the other ladies, not excepting the belles of the ball. Tony danced with each of them in

turn, and then chose the youngest for his bride.

"Now this," cried the lord of the mansion, "is something like!

—I'll hunt all day and have a ball every night, and that will carry me on to the wedding. And when I'm married time won't hang so

heavy on my hands."

Saying and doing was one with Tony, and accordingly balls were regularly the order of the *night*, and they danced and danced so many nights running, that every body was completely knocked up; and even Tony, though nothing could make him sleepy, was quite tired of whirling about.

Then followed his wedding; and he rang for sumptuous presents for his bride and her sisters, and all his household, including his lords-in-waiting and their families; and there was a long series of merry-makings, balls, concerts, hunts, and water-parties, and Tony's bride

was the admired of all beholders.

After this holiday existence had lasted some time, Tony, finding

that every one seemed to require rest, thought he would likewise enjoy a little quiet; so he dismissed the supernumerary guests, and began to lead a more domestic life. But if he found it so difficult to fill up the extra hours of his existence in a perpetual round of dissipation, the time seemed to hang still heavier on his hands in the dead calm that succeeded to all these diversions. Besides this, there arose some little bickerings between himself and his bride, which did not help to mend the matter. Tony felt vexed that his wife should feel drowsy, and often drop off to sleep as they sat by the fireside; and she, on her part, declared that a husband who never slept was perfectly insupportable, and but that her papa had concealed this peculiarity from her, she would never have married one who was so cursed. Tony retorted that, far from being cursed, it only proved him to be a superior being; and, from little to much, they grew so warm on the subject, that he said she had better take care or he would ring the house down.

"I don't care if you do," replied she.

But then Tony recollected that he must wait till the end of the year before he could throw up his bargain; so, making a virtue of necessity, he said he wouldn't proceed to such lengths till he had given her more time to reflect, and he rushed out of the house in a passion, and went into the forest to cool himself.

"I wish I could meet my friend the pedlar," thought he; "but of course he is not such a fool as to be losing his time, but is sound asleep somewhere. Really this wakefulness begins to be

intolerable!"

Then, after a minute's reflection, he brightened up; and, taking out his bell, he rang it sharply, crying out, "I want some guests as

sleepless as myself!"

A faint rustling was immediately heard amongst the leaves, and, in another moment, Tony found himself surrounded on all sides by troops of elves. The branches of the trees were full of them, and they were scattered about on the grass in such quantities that Tony feared making a step, lest he should crush myriads of the little people.

"Hey-day!" cried Tony, "here are guests with a vengeance! Talk of the — but no, that wouldn't be civil. But tell me, fair lady," continued he, "addressing one who appeared the queen of

the troop, "who you are, and where you come from?"

"My name is Starlight," replied she, "and I come from a long way hence at your request. Now tell me what you want, only make naste, for my time is short."

"Why," said Tony, "I want you and your people to keep me company, as I can't go to sleep. And if my house is not large enough to hold you, it shall be increased to the size of the nearest market-town."

"We cannot stay with you," said the queen, smiling, "or the world would be left in darkness. We watch while others sleep. But I can endow any one you wish with sleeplessness."

Tony was overjoyed at this proposal, and begged the queen to

make his wife sleepless.

"Where is she?" said Starlight.

Tony led her into the house, where they found the young wife still in her chair, but fast asleep, from the exhaustion caused by the late hours she was always keeping. Starlight touched her eyelids with her wand, and she immediately woke up, and, seeing Tony smile, inquired why he had disturbed her. "I thought you had slept long enough," said he, and he turned round to wink at the fairy, but she was gone.

"Well, I think I have," said his wife, smiling in her turn, "for

I no longer feel sleepy."

In the joy of the moment Tony embraced her, and could not resist telling her all that had happened; adding, "Now we shall be

quite comfortable."

But his wife was horror-struck at the thought of being reduced to the same plight as himself. Having been bred a fine lady, she had always found time hang rather heavily on her hands, and she now looked with dismay at the additional burden that was put upon her. She therefore heaped the bitterest reproaches on Tony, who now began to think he had perhaps acted foolishly for their mutual interest. And, indeed, from that day there was no peace in the house for the servants, who were rung up at all hours of the night; nor for the lords and ladies in waiting, who were incessantly called upon to settle disputes between their "Highnesses," who, having double the time, had of course double the number of quarrels to what other couples are subject to.

At length the year — which was two years to Tony — drew to its close. He had now had his fill of grandeur, and feasting, and being waited upon; yet he was sitting, from mere habit, at a splendid banquet — which was his family dinner — and eating off golden plates, at a table luxuriously spread, and ornamented with vases of flowers,

and groups of silver statues bearing tapers.

"This is all very fine," thought he; "but somehow I used to eat with more appetite."

His wife inquired if the dinner were not to his liking, that he

sat staring before him without touching his food.

"It is well enough," replied Tony, "only I was thinking that there is one thing wanting."

"What is that?" asked she.

"A good nap after dinner," answered Tony.

"Why does not your Highness ring for it?" said one of the courtiers; "a prince like yourself can surely command any thing."

Courtiers always flatter princes to their ruin!

This reminded Tony that it was the last day of the year, which he had overlooked in the monotonous kind of life he was leading, where yesterday so closely resembles to-morrow; and, snatching up his bell, he cried, "Faith I will!" Then, after pausing one second, as if to ask himself—Shall I bear it another year for all these fine things? he rang away like mad, calling out, "A nap! a nap! a nap!"

The palace immediately collapsed like a soap-bubble — banquet, wife, lords and ladies in waiting, and all — and Tony found himself on the floor of his cottage, which had shrunk back to its primitive

dimensions.

The pedlar started from the chair in which he had sunk to sleep, crying out, "Already?"

"Ha! ha!" cried Tony, parodying his former words, "what

makes you so fond of sleep?"

"Why, man," said the pedlar, "couldn't you wait till the end

of seven years before you pulled down your palace?"

"Don't talk to me of palaces!" quoth Tony; "nature bids us eat when we're hungry, and sleep when we're sleepy, and I have

now learnt the value of a good nap."

So the pedlar took back his silver bell and went his ways, yawning, and evidently much disappointed, while Tony went off to sleep; and I never heard that as long as he lived he ever regretted pulling his house about his ears.

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Guy Faux Day.

GUY FAUX DAY.

BY MARY ROBERTS.

STRANGE it seemed, to those who had lived in the country all their days, when, on the fifth of November, instead of ruddy boys and farm-servants, with familiar faces, asking for pence towards making a bonfire on the village green, came, rushing down the street, barking dogs, and half-grown sweeps, with a motley group of urchins, clamouring and shouting as if to demand a subsidy. And most oddly were some of them attired, in gaudy dresses with pointed caps upon their heads and short truncheons in their hands. Four or five of the strongest upheld a grotesque kind of handbarrow, on which was seated an effigy in still more extraordinary habiliments. Well might the dog begin to rage and the cat run away to hide herself, for they both came from the country and never heard such incongruous sounds before.

It seemed as if the bearers were somewhat weary, for they set down the car, and him who rode therein, on the grass-plot before the door; strange contrast to the late-blowing rose, with its lingering flowers that shed their fragrance above his head. A lookeron might have moralised concerning the beauty and repose of those sweet flowers, types of all loveliness, when contrasted with the painted and bedizened boys and their ragged followers, who stood that day beside the rose-tree. "Please your honour, a penny. 'Tis but once a-year. A penny for burning old Guy. Hurra!" The penny was soon given, and away they went, old Guy, his bearers and attendants, shouting and dancing down the street. Take care, methought, how you go, or Guy will tumble in the mud.

Through many a crowded street and across many a wide square, with their grandly fronted houses, went on that wild company. Guy jolting and shaking in his car, and his attendants clamouring for the accustomed penny. You remember, playmates, how we watched them from place to place. But never were they seen to venture down one of those narrow alleys which diverge from the principal streets. They dreaded a rescue for master Guy; for themselves, the rushing forth of Irish matrons with mops and

broomsticks.

Presently another Guy was seen coming through the crowd, numerously attended, and having his car upborne by older boys. The car was large, and fantastically adorned, with a huge barrel and fagot tied behind, and in front sat an effigy nearly as large as life, dressed in the costume of King James's days. He had a peaked beard, and doublet, high-heeled shoes, and white stockings with knee-bows and buckles. A ruff adorned his neck; and he looked far more like a gallant going to a ball, or masque, than a malefactor being taken to execution. But there are strange contrarieties in all human exhibitions, and boys like to mimic the actings of men. The poet tells us that lessons may be learned from brooks and stones; how much more from exhibitions such as these?





THE YOUNG SHIP-CARVER.

BY DINAH MARIA MULOCK.

Walter Rutherford sat busily engaged in drawing. He had placed himself close to the window of his mother's drawing-room, and was striving to copy a beautiful statuette, which she loved, before the twilight came on. At his feet nestled his young sister Marion, looking up every now and then to see how he was going on, and near him sat this dear mother, who shared in all the enthusiastic dreams of the boy-artist. The little group were very silent; Walter was so intent upon his work, and the others did not like to disturb him.

The boy at last lifted his head, looked long and earnestly at the statuette, then at his own drawing, and said with a half sigh,—

"Ah! mother, how I wish I had genius! how I wish I could

be a great artist!"

Mrs. Rutherford smiled. "Do not despair, my dear boy; remember that every man of genius was once young like you. All things must have a beginning. The path to excellence is always hard; but is rarely unattainable by those who set out with patience, and firmness, and hope. I do not say that you will be one of these great men, Walter; but still you have nothing to contend with, compared to some of them, who triumphed over all difficulties. Should you like to hear a story of what courage and perseverance can do?"

Walter looked delighted, and little Marion clapped her hands in glee, with the oft-repeated childish cry of "Oh, mamma, do tell us

a story!"

Mrs. Rutherford began.—

"Nearly eighty years ago there lived, in one of the towns on the sea-coast of Iceland, a poor ship-carver and his family. Little means had he to keep hunger and cold from his wife and little ones in that freezing climate, where, for one half the year, the sun is never seen. Bitter as poverty is in our own pleasant England, how fearful it must be in cold, bleak Iceland! The ship-carver worked night and day—in winter-time it was always night—in making figure-heads for vessels. Some of them were ugly, indeed, -all were rude and clumsy; yet he was considered a good workman in his way. But few ships came into the port, and the poor wood-carver's employment grew less day by day. His delicate yet uncomplaining wife became paler and thinner, and his little children pined away, until their rosy faces grew sickly and meagre. Winter was coming, and the father shuddered at the prospect; for, to the houseless and fireless, an Iceland winter is almost certain death. The ship-carver thought much, and then said to his wife,—

"'If we stay here we must starve; for I can get no work, and we have no money. Let us ask that good Captain Christiansund to take us in his ship to Copenhagen, where I have heard that many vessels are always coming in, and there is plenty of

work.

"The pale wife looked round the bare walls of their hut and shivered. 'Must we leave home, and see Iceland no more?' And then the babe at her bosom gave vent to a low, wailing cry. 'The

child will die of hunger,' she muttered. 'Husband, every where

is home with you; we will go to Copenhagen.'

"And so they went. The good captain recommended the poor Icelander, and he got employment in his own trade. His wife looked less pale,—the children throve apace, and after a time another son was born to them, whom they called Bertel. Little Bertel grew up a sweet, fair-haired child,—his father's darling. In the summer-time, when the ships came into the port, the ship-carver and his family were very happy, for then the father had plenty of work. Every day he went cheerfully to his labour, and toiled all day at wood-carving, singing old Icelandic songs; while little Bertel played about his feet, watching him, and dancing with ecstasy, as he saw the figure assume its form under his father's hands.

"But in winter the little family had much to suffer; for they were still very poor, and had to struggle hard to procure the commonest food and clothing. Bertel, young as he was, was their greatest comfort. Not only were their eyes gladdened by his childish beauty, which not even poverty could destroy, but he had that sweet and loving disposition which is above all beauty. He bore every hardship without complaining, was always gentle and patient, so that his brothers and sisters could not be jealous of the love his father shewed him. He tried by every means in his power to lighten and assist his mother's daily toil, and to have a cheerful smile always awaiting his father. As Bertel grew older, his intelligent countenance became thoughtful beyond his years; his father was too poor to send him to school, and the boy seldom went out to play with other children, but spent his whole time in his father's workshop, carving all sorts of fanciful things with the spare tools out of the rejected pieces of wood. Sometimes the ship-carver would stop in his work and glance at his little son, who sat so contentedly in a corner, as busy with his childish task as if it had been something very important.

"By degrees the boy's employment began to assume more consequence in his father's eyes. The ship-carver would come and look over Bertel's shoulder while he worked, and call him 'a good boy,' and 'a clever boy,' until the child's bright blue eyes fairly danced with pleasure. At last Bertel was promoted to the high honour of assisting his father in carving figure-heads; and now he was indeed proud, for not only was he able to lighten his father's work, but even to add to his earnings. Most happy was the good

and dutiful boy in his daily labour, so that many a high-born child in that proud capital might have envied the little ship-carver of

Copenhagen.

"One day his father was ill and unable to work; so that Bertel had to finish a figure-head without any assistance. It was to represent a woman's head; and the captain who ordered it was a cross old man, and very hard to be pleased, so that it was no wonder if the child of eleven years old felt timid as he began his work, of which he had not dared to tell his father. So all that day, and the next, did the little boy carve his rough wooden block. When the ship-carver returned to his workshop, he saw there a head, which he, at least, thought most beautiful.

"Bertel, trembling and blushing in answer to his father's inquiries, confessed the secret. The wood-carver took his boy in his

arms.

"'You will be a cleverer man than your father, my little Bertel. I could not have done any thing half so good!'

"In came the cross old captain, but he felt no anger when he

saw his beautiful figure-head.

"'You will be a great man some day, little fellow!' cried the sailor, patting Bertel's curly head with his huge hand. 'Some of these days I shall be proud of having your work on the Ulrika.'

"The ship-carver began seriously to think how his son's talents might best be cultivated. Though an ignorant man, he saw and felt that Bertel, a mere child, could do nore than himself, who had been years at work at the trade. The good but unlearned father thought much on the subject, talked with his wife, and finally

determined that his boy should learn to draw.

"There was in Copenhagen an Academy of Arts, something like our own, where drawing and modelling were taught gratuitously Bertel's father never ceased his exertions, until the boy was admitted to study there. Time and patience had done much for the poor Icelander; he was no longer on the brink of destitution: he had always work to do, and he was able to spare his son from labour some hours daily, that Bertel might advance in the pursuit to which he now devoted himself with such passionate eagerness. But not even the practice of his beloved art could keep the boy from his duty, and every day he assisted his father in the workshop, until the figure-heads which came from thence were renowned over all Copenhagen.

"The little fair-haired boy who had played in the ship-carver's

shop, became a successful and talented student at the Academy; not only had he learnt to draw and model, but he had, by self study, remedied the want of early education. At seventeen he was a clever and well-informed youth, while in art his talents were wonderful, and many were the praises bestowed on him by his instructors and the patrons of the Academy. Yet, with all this success, Bertel was as gentle and simple-minded as he had been in his childhood. Ever of a timid and retiring disposition, he aspired no higher than to follow his father's trade, and be the support of his parents in their old age. But such a destiny was not to be his.

"At twenty-two, Albert (for he was now called no longer by the pet diminutive of Bertel) had gained the highest honours which the Danish Academy could bestow. He was the successful competitor for a prize, by which the fortunate gainer was chosen to study for three years at Rome, with a yearly allowance from the Academy. And now the whole fortunes of the young man were changed. He was no longer a poor carver in wood, toiling at a mean trade, but an artist,—a sculptor, whose rising talents were acknowledged by the Academy which had sent him forth. Proud, indeed, were the old parents of their darling son, from whose fame they hoped so much; and with their consent and blessing, Albert left Copenhagen,

and went to sunny Italy.

"But the troubles of the young man were not yet over. He came a stranger to a strange land; the warm, enthusiastic Italians shrank from the reserve and coldness of the young Northman, whose nature was so different from their own. Even while they admired his talents, they liked him not. But Albert, quiet, patient, and persevering, went calmly on his way, entirely engrossed by his The allotted three years passed swiftly by, and the young sculptor, diligent as he was, had not gained half the knowledge he desired. He felt that he stood yet on the very threshold of art, But he could not stay longer at Rome, for he had no money, and his allowance had expired. Timid and reserved by nature, Albert had sought few friends, and no patrons. There were none to help him; he could not support himself in Rome, and in utter despair the young sculptor determined to give up all his high dreams of success in art, and return to Copenhagen to pursue once more his old trade of ship-carving.

"A few days before the time he had fixed upon to bid adieu for ever to Rome and to his art, a stranger visited Albert's studio. He was an Englishman who loved art, and had heard by chance of

the young Northern sculptor. He examined all that the studio contained, and was struck with the wonderful genius of the artist, who stood by, pale, silent, disconsolate, and almost insensible to the warm praises of his guest.

"The Englishman stayed long admiring a beautiful statue of

Jason. Albert turned away with a look of deep sadness.

"'I intended,' said he, 'that when fortune smiled on me, this work should be a gift to the Academy to which I owe so much; but that will never be,' he added with a sigh. 'I must forsake art for ever.'

"'Why so, my young friend?' asked the Englishman. 'You, who have done so much? who have such genius?' And he took the young artist's hand, and looked in his face with such kindly interest, that Albert's reserve was melted, and he told him all.

"The Englishman not only gave sympathy but aid. He purchased the statue at a sum which enabled Albert to continue his studies at Rome. The crisis of his fate was past; his patient endurance was crowned with success, his genius triumphed, and the young Dane became one of the noblest sculptors of modern times."

"Mamma, mamma," cried Walter Rutherford, his eyes gleam-

ing with enthusiasm,—"is this story really true?"

"It is indeed true," said his mother.

"And who-oh! who was this noble artist?"

"Albert Thorwaldsen."

Walter started eagerly to his feet. "Oh! mamma, I am so glad—so very glad. And was the great sculptor once the little boy

of whom you have told us?"

"He was, Walter; nor have I added any thing in the history of his early struggles. His after life you are acquainted with; how that he became one of the first sculptors of our day; and—what is more to his praise still—he was, throughout a long life, a good and virtuous man."

"Was! mamma: is he then dead?"

"Yes: Thorwaldsen died in 1844, at a good old age, which made even those who loved and mourned him scarcely regret that his course was ended, for it had been a glorious one. At different times you have, I think, seen prints or casts from most of Thorwaldsen's works; and I dare say even my little Marion, whose sleepy eyes are just closing, will remember the white bas-reliefs of Day and Night on the mantelpiece in the drawing-room."

Marion looked up smiling. "Yes, yes, I remember; those dear

little children, fast asleep, creeping close to their mother's bosom, and the crown of poppy-seeds on her head, which you told me, Walter, was placed there because the juice of poppies makes people sleepy, and the great owl in one corner."



Walter could not help laughing at his sister's description of this beautiful design of Night, at which the little girl did not look quite pleased; but a kind word of praise from her mother brought back Marion's smiles, and Walter made her forget his untimely merriment, by telling her of another celebrated work of Thorwaldsen's, of which he had read an account. It was the enormous lion nearly eighty feet high, carved by him out of a rock near Berne, by order of the Swiss republic, to commemorate the recovery of their liberties.

Marion opened her dark eyes to their widest extent at this wonderful tale.

"Your brother is quite right," said Mrs. Rutherford, thus appealed to, "for I have myself seen the great lion of Berne."

"And mamma," asked Walter, after a thoughtful pause, "do tell me, who was that kind, good man, who first aided poor Thorwaldsen and discovered his genius?"

"He was a Mr. Hope, a most liberal patron of art."

"We have indeed reason to be proud that an Englishman was the first to encourage this great sculptor," said Walter. "And now tell me what Thorwaldsen was like, for I have never seen any portrait of him."

"I have only seen a slight sketch, in which he is represented as an old man of mild and placid countenance, with long, silvery hair, falling in thick masses, a broad open forehead, and small but brilliant eyes."

"Thank you, mamma; I can now fancy him before me; I always

like to think thus of those I admire."

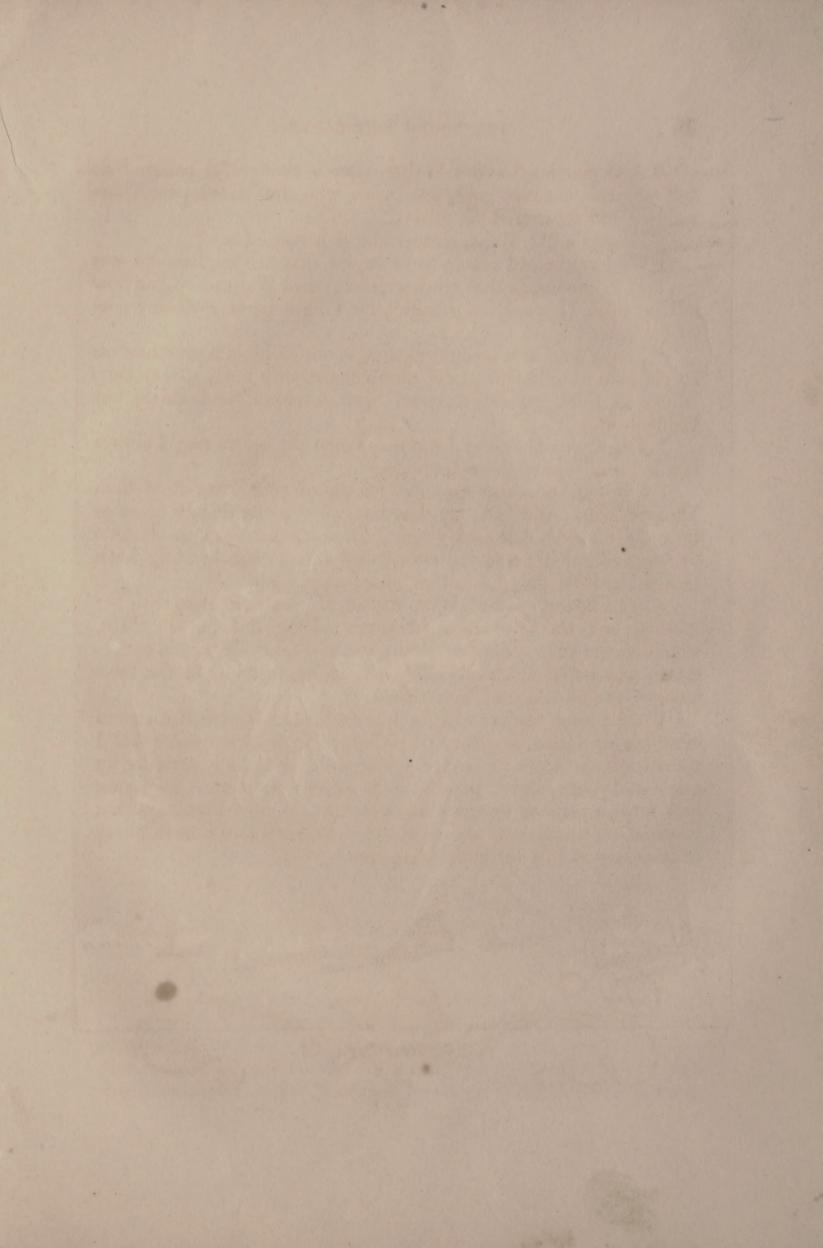
"I do not know any one more worthy of your admiration than Thorwaldsen. And now, my dear boy, we must really talk no more to-night, for see! it is nearly dark; Marion's pet rooks are all gone to rest, and she must do the same," said the mother, bending down to kiss the little sleepy face that rested on her lap.

After a loving good-night to Walter, Marion went away with her mother, and the boy remained alone. Long did he sit there, watching the stars come out one by one, and fancying, in his enthusiasm, how noble and happy a life it must be, to tread in the foot-

steps of one like Albert Thorwaldsen.

If my young readers wish to know whether Walter Rutherford ever became a great artist, as he so longed to be, I am sorry that I cannot tell them, for he is very young still. But he is growing up a talented youth, and as good as he is clever; so there is no saying how great a man he may one day become. Walter often says that his chief encouragement and incentive to perseverance is in thinking of the story of The Little Ship-Carver.







Christmas-Day.

CHRISTMAS-DAY.

BY MARY ROBERTS.

THE night is cold and foggy; carriages move slowly, with link-boys at the horses' heads, and long, unwieldy, heavily-laden machines, such as our fathers never dreamed of, with anxious faces seen dimly at the windows, scarcely know how to proceed, so dense is the fog. Waggons creak ponderously; and among them are light carts, looking as if in danger of being crushed, and men, muffled in riding-coats, guide their horses warily through the crowd. Gas-lights beaming brightly from some large shopwindow, reveal the motley assemblage, and shed a lurid kind of glare on men and horses; but they pass on, and disappear in the dense fog.

We shall look in vain for the opening of friendly doors, throwing from within a cheering light on young faces, glowing with health and gladness, blushing and smiling, as the well-known Christmas-carol is trolled forth; nor will the low, sweet chime of hand-bells enchant the listener with their hallowed minstrelsy. London has neither sights nor sounds like these. Away, then, to the "Old House at Home," where Christmas is right

welcome and well kept.

Here, then, we are, and the country looks as if made ready for a festival. Frost, with his elfin sprites, has been busy during the night decking the leafless branches with glittering gems, and causing even the coarsest herbage to resemble icy feathers. He has thrown across the holly long rows of seeming diamonds, strung on the spider's web, and fringed the edges of all leaves

with sparkling crystals.

Heard you not sweet music in the night, waking up the sleepers—to think of that first heavenly carol, when angels came trooping round the shepherds, bringing good tidings of great joy? And then, how merrily rang the bells, when day began to dawn; and still they ring! This is a holiday worth keeping; and very pleasant it is to see the neighbours coming forth, and meeting with kind looks in the old grey church.

Now the day has closed! The hospitable board spread with Christmas fare, and gaily decked, has been shared in by numerous guests. And here we are in the great oak drawing-room! Bunches of thickly-berried holly are ranged on the walls; and from the carved centre of the ceiling hangs a noble bunch of holly,

enlivened with the mystic mistletoe. The aged sire occupies a kind of throne near the blazing hearth, and beside him, in a curiously carved and high-backed chair, sits his stately lady—helpmate through the shades and sun-gleams of at least fifty years. Three generations meet this evening; noble-looking gentlemen and ladies, young married people; youths and maidens, full of glee and gossip; little children trotting about the room; and last in the line of descent is a "wee thing," with a crisped cap and long robe, borne in the nurse's arms from one blithe welcome to another.

The door is thrown open with no small ceremony. Lights are seen in the hall, and people going to and fro. What can it mean? "A Christmas cake!" shouted all the youngsters; and a goodly cake it is, frosted with sugar, white as snow, and surrounded with choice flowers, among which the pure white Christmas rose, opening beneath storms of sleet and rain—an emblem flower - peeps forth amid the polished leaves and red berries of the holly. Next come tarts and apples, with all kinds of nuts, mottoes enclosed in mimic fruit, and small rockets, curiously adorned, and all such hospitable fare as old Christmas provides for his children. And around the cheerful board, beside which is placed a memorial fir, bedecked with presents, are eyes that glisten with delight; then one of the young men begins a carol of most touching melody, which the oldest had heard in far-off days, and those who had gone but a little way in life's journey associate with all the delights and hopes of Christmas.

Nor is Christmas passed by in the cottage unobserved. It must be a poor family indeed that cannot afford their plum-pudding on that day;—and how delighted are the children when it is brought, smoking hot, upon the board! what anticipations they have had, and how glorious is the reality! Oh, Christmas is indeed a happy time for old and young, for rich and poor!





GUDBRAND OF THE MOUNTAIN.

A Norwegian Legend.

THERE once lived a man whose name was Gudbrand; and as he possessed a farm in a remote spot on the declivity of a mountain,

people called him Gudbrand of the Mountain.

He lived so happily with his wife, and they agreed so well, that she thought every thing her husband did was for the best, and that it could not have been improved upon. Let him manage anyhow, she always found means to be delighted at what he had done. This worthy couple were the owners of a piece of arable land, and had a hundred dollars in their strong box, besides a couple of cows in the stable. One day the wife said to Gudbrand:—"I think that we ought to take one of the cows to town and sell it, in order that we may have a little pocket-money at our disposal; for we are such industrious people that we ought to have a few shillings in our purse as other folks have, particularly as we don't wish to touch the

hundred dollars in the chest. And really I don't know what we should want with more than one cow, and I shall be the gainer by baving only one to attend to, instead of being bothered with two."

Gudbrand thought this was all very reasonable and very proper; so he immediately took the cow, and went to town to sell it. But it happened that there was nobody in the town that was willing to

purchase the cow.

"Never mind," thought Gudbrand; "I'll go home again with my cow; I have both stable and yoke ready for her, and the way is no longer for going back than coming:" and with this cheering reflection he plodded homewards in the most contented mood.



He had not gone far before he met a man with a horse that he wanted to sell. Now Gudbrand thought it were better to have a horse than a cow, so he made an exchange with the stranger.

When he had gone a little further he met another man, who was driving a fat pig before him, and then Gudbrand thought it would be still better to have a fat pig than a horse, and so he exchanged with the man. He then went on, and after a while he met a man with a goat. "It is certainly better anyhow to have a goat than a pig," thought Gudbrand, and again he made an exchange with the owner of the goat. He now went a good deal further, till he met a man with a sheep, and with him he likewise made an exchange, on the principle "that it is always better to have a sheep than a goat." On going further he met a man with a goose, and then Gudbrand

exchanged his sheep against the goose. After this he went a long, long way, till he met a man with a cock, and he once more made an exchange: for he thought, "after all, it is still better to have a cock than a goose." He then walked on and on, till it began to grow late, when feeling very hungry he sold the cock for threepence, with which he bought something to eat; "for after all," thus reasoned Gudbrand of the Mountain, "it is better to bring one's self back safe and sound, than to bring home a cock." He then sped on his way home, till he reached the farm of his nearest neighbour, where in he went, just as Hans the ploughboy was driving home the cattle.



"Well! how did you fare in town?" inquired the good folks.
"Why, but so so," answered Gudbrand. "I can't say much
for my luck, neither have I much reason to complain." And hereupon he related all that had happened from beginning to end.

"Well, I'm sure! you'll get a warm reception from your wife, when you reach home," quoth the farmer. "Lord help you! I

shouldn't like to be in your shoes."

"Things might have gone worse, however," replied Gudbrand of the Mountain; "but whether good, bad, or indifferent I have

such an excellent wife, that she never reproaches me, let me do what I will."

"That may be," said the man; "yet somehow I can't believe it."

"Shall we lay a wager?" asked Gudbrand. "I have a hundred

dollars in my chest, will you lay as much against them?"

"Done!" said the neighbour, and as twilight was now coming on, they both set out for Gudbrand's farm. When they had reached it, the neighbour remained outside the door, while Gudbrand went in to his wife, and they began to talk in the following manner:—

"Good evening," said Gudbrand of the Mountain, as he walked

into the room.

"Good evening," replied the wife; "praised be God! you are

come back again, are you?"

Sure enough he was back. Then the wife inquired how he had got on in town. "But so so," answered Gudbrand: "I can't much boast of my luck. On reaching town, nobody would purchase my cow, so I changed it for a horse."

"Ay—there, indeed, you do deserve my thanks," said she. "We are so well off that we may as well drive to church as other people, and if we have the means of getting ourselves a horse, why should

not we? Pray, goodman, go and bring him in."

"Stop," replied Gudbrand, "I have not got the horse exactly;

for after going on a bit I changed it for a pig."

"No! did you?" cried the wife; "why that's the very thing I should have done myself! Thank you a thousand times, my dear husband. Now I shall have some bacon in the house to offer the folks that come to see us. What, indeed, do we want with a horse? People would only say that we had grown too grand to walk to church as we used to do. Prithee, goodman, go and fetch in the pig."

"But I haven't got the pig any more than the horse," said Gudbrand; "for on going somewhat further I changed it for a

milch-goat."

"Why, what capital notions you always have!" exclaimed the wife; "for when I come to think of it, what do we want with a pig? People would only say, 'they are eating up their substance.' But now that I have a goat, I can have milk and cheese, and without parting with the goat either. So, goodman, let's see Nannygoat."

"But I haven't got any goat either," answered Gudbrand; "for, on going a little further, I changed the goat for an excellent sheep."
"Now, did you?" cried the wife: "well to be sure, you have

done every thing that I could have wished, just as if I had been at your elbow all the time! What, indeed, should we want a goat for? I should have always been running after it, and climbing up hill and down dale. But with a sheep, I shall not only have wool to make clothes with, but something to eat into the bargain. So prithee, goodman, go and fetch the sheep in."

"But I no longer have the sheep," said Gudbrand; "for, when I

had gone a little further, I exchanged it for a goose."

"Oh, thank you a thousand times over for that!" cried the wife; "for what could I have done with the sheep! I have neither distaff nor spindle, nor do I want them either, and care still less for the plague of weaving clothes, which we can just as well go on buying as we have done hitherto. And now I shall have an opportunity of tasting a bit of goose, which I have hankered after so long, and of stuffing my pillow with down. So now, goodman, go and fetch in the goose."

"Ay, but I have no goose to fetch," replied Gudbrand "for,

after going a little further, I changed it for a cock."

"Only think now of your hitting on the very thing I should have chosen!" exclaimed the wife. "Why a cock is for all the world as good as if you had bought an alarum watch; for the cock crows every morning at four o'clock, and so we shall be sure to be stirring by times. After all we did not want a goose, for I don't know how to dress goose's flesh; and as to my pillow, I can stuff it with seaweeds just as well. So go your ways, goodman, and fetch the cock."

"But I have no cock either," said Gudbrand; "for, after going somewhat further, I felt so tremendously hungry that I was fain to sell the cock for threepence, in order to be able to come home alive."

"And right well did you do!" cried the wife. "Let you set about what you will, you are sure to do every thing just to my liking. What does it signify whether we have a cock or not? Surely we are our own masters, and can lie in bed of a morning as long as we please. And now, thank God that I have got you back again—you who are so clever at every thing—I want neither cock, goose, pig, nor cow."

Gudbrand now opened the door. "Have I won the hundred dollars?" cried he. And the neighbour was forced to own that he fairly had.



THE ASH.

From " The Woodland Companion," by Dr. Aikin.

The ash is a tall tree, having a light thin foliage which gives it a graceful appearance, especially when contrasted with trees of greater mass and depth of shade. It flourishes most in woods, but will also thrive well in good soils upon open ground. It runs its roots a great way near the surface; which quality, together with the destructive property of its drippings, renders it injurious to herbage, and still more to corn. When growing near water it sometimes hangs down its boughs like the weeping willow. No tree is so often met with in ruins and upon ancient walls, probably on account of the readiness with which its winged seeds are borne by the wind. It insinuates its roots far into the crevices of these old buildings, and thereby becomes an instrument of the destruction of what affords it support. In like manner it fastens upon loose slaty rocks, and decorates them with its verdure. It is one

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of the latest trees in coming into leaf, and loses its leaves early in autumn. The bunches of long skinny seeds, called keys, on the fertile trees, have a singular appearance. It is observed that while some ash-trees bear great quantities of keys yearly, others seem never to bear any. The former, however, are naked of leaves and unsightly; whereas the latter abound in foliage, and are pleasing objects. The bark is smooth and light coloured; the leaves dark green. A well-grown ash is a handsome and elegant object, though all may not agree with the Roman poet in giving it the prize of beauty above all the natives of the forest. There are few which excel it in utility; for its wood, next to that of the oak, is employed for the greatest variety of purposes. Thus our Spenser, mentioning the particular uses of a number of trees, characterises the ash as

". . for nothing ill."

It may be peculiarly termed the husbandman's tree; for it is one of the principal materials in making ploughs, harrows, waggons, carts, and various other implements for rustic use: hence a proportional number of ash-trees should be planted in every farm. The toughness of its wood rendered it a favourite with the heroes of old for the shafts of their potent spears; whence it is poetically termed "the martila ash." With us it is much employed in poles for various purposes, and also in spokes of wheels, tool-handles, and the like. Dairy utensils are mostly made of ash. Its loppings make good fuel, and it has the quality of burning when fresh as well as dry, and also with little smoke. Its ashes afford good potash. The bark of the ash has an astringent quality, and is used in tanning calf-skin. Its leaves are eaten by cattle.





THE CHILD AND THE BEE.

BY MRS. JAMES WHITTLE.

On the side of a hill sloping to the south, which overlooked a beautiful valley with high mountains beyond, was an old-fashioned garden. The tall box hedges which formed its boundary were carefully clipped, and the cypress-trees which shot up into the clear blue sky had stood the brunt of many a wintry blast. Formal parterres of flowers were seen here and there, and a profusion of gay blossoms was scattered around. Here were the sweet stockgillyflowers, the tall columbines and the stately foxglove, the double rocket and hedges of sweet pea; while honeysuckles twined around the little arbours, and the blush and cabbage roses grew like the spoiled favourites of the place, wild and unpruned. A broad terrace, crowning the summit of the hill, commanded a lovely view. Along the valley ran a rapid mountain-stream, tumbling and murmuring over its pebbly bed; meadows stretched away on either side; little copses of birch and fir were seen on the distant hills, and groups of sycamores and elms dotted the intervening plain. Behind the garden was a wood covering the hills in that direction for many miles; a tangled wilderness of underwood and sweet wild-flowers, overshadowed by the graceful foliage of the beech and ash, with now and then a noble oak rearing its giant

form through the green canopy.

In a warm, sunny nook of this quaint old garden stood a beehive — and a right merry life, I wot, had the little busy bees who lived there; for hardly could a lovelier place be found than these box-hedges enclosed, or sweeter honied flowers than such as grew beneath their shelter. A house stood at the bottom of the hill, to whose inmates this pleasant garden belonged. Amongst them was one fair child, who loved nothing so well as to wander about amongst the flowers; and often would she sit, silently looking up into the bright sky above, and wonder what lay beyond those fleecy clouds that seemed bending down to kiss the verdant hills: and sometimes she would listen to the birds as they sang on the trees above her head, until she fancied she could understand their songs; and then she felt her heart glow with the love which they were chanting forth—the love of God and of their kind. The hum of the insects and the murmuring of the bees, too, had a meaning for this little maiden; and she walked amongst the birds and flowers like a loving, gentle spirit. But her chief delight was to steal away from every one, and wander alone in the deep shade of the wood. Choosing some quiet nook, she would sit until the moonbeams, shining through the leaves, told her that night was coming on, and that the wood was no longer a place for her. would the child wish that she were a fairy, that she might dance in the pale moonlight, and feed upon the honey dew that hung heavily on the flowers. To serve the Fairy Queen—to fly over the world, doing her behests or tending her favourite flowers; to spread her mushroom table with choice dainties; to gather for her the sweet fresh berries, and hand her sparkling dew in "acorn cups filled to the brim:" these, she thought, would be her best employ. dreamed the little maiden: and often as she sat under the trees she saw and heard things which made her wonder more and more. She learned to know all the little creatures who dwelt in the wood, and they, losing their fear, would stop to gaze on her; the squirrel leaping from bough to bough, the hare darting swiftly across the glade, the pigeon high above her head, telling its plaintive tale —all seemed to know and love the child. The droning beetle and the chirping grashopper, too, became her friends; and when evening closed in, and the nightingale poured forth her soul in

song, the child would listen with rapture, until tears stole silently down her cheeks.

In the beehive in the old garden there lived a bee who had long watched this little child, who had followed her as she glided amongst the flowers, or flew after her when she wandered away into the dark wood. The bee loved the child; and, seeing in her heart the love for all created things which nature had implanted there, desired to teach her how best to use it for the good of She herself had learned that idleness never led to happiness, and she longed to tell the dreaming child all her experience. One sultry day the maiden had sought the shade which a group of noble beech-trees cast on the mossy bank beneath; around her sprang a grove of the tall foxglove. She was musing how, were she a fairy, she would hide herself in their pendent bells, and swing to and fro in every passing breeze, when suddenly a voice greeted her. She looked up—no one was there; she listened, and again it spoke. Could it be a fairy? She held her breath, and again looked wistfully round; when the voice, like a soft murmur, whispered in her ear, "Look up, fair child! In the blue bell which hangs beside you I am sitting, not a fairy, but a bee."

The wondering child sat still and listened, while the bee went

on to say,-

"If you would like to hear it I will tell you where I was born, and how I spend my time; and you will learn perhaps that bees may lead a happier life than even fairies. We fly, like them, from flower to flower, choosing the sweetest and fairest; swinging in a lily's bed, or nestling among the velvet leaves of a rose; basking in the warm sunshine, and revelling in the pure, clear air. But we enjoy a happiness unknown to fairies—the bliss of being useful. In our flights we search for the sweet honey which lies hid in the fragrant cups of the blossoms, and return to our home laden with food for the young and helpless; by our labours are the hard-working hivebees nourished; and in winter, when dark days come and storms arise, we all rejoice together in the produce of our industry. Thus we are doubly blest; for our daily toil brings us in contact with the loveliest of earth's creations. Thus will it be with you, my child, when you shall have learned that to work for others is better than to dream life idly away, wishing for that which cannot be. Learn now my history.—The first thing remember, on opening my eyes.

was finding myself lying at the bottom of a cell. How long I had lain there I know not, but I was certainly not then the same creature I now am, but rather like those little dark caterpillars that live on rose-trees. Bees were flying about very busily; and soon one came, and, settling on the edge of the wall of my cell, gave me some liquid from her trunk, which I afterwards learned was honey. My kind nurse returned again and again, until I felt myself growing strong. Soon my coat began to tease me, and by working my body about, I managed to get out of it, and then I trampled it down and left it at the bottom of my cell. I grew very fast; and in time I found the cell becoming too small for me, and I refused to eat any more. I think I must then have fallen asleep. The last thing I remember was the sound of the bees as they covered me up in my cell, which they did with a crust of wax. How long I lay there I cannot tell; but after some time I began to want more space, and was conscious of a change in my form; so, raising my head, I made a hole through the crust that had been put over me, and found, much to my surprise, that I could fly like those bees who had fed me when I was a little worm. was very proud of my new wings, and flew about the hive, hoping to be admired; for, I am ashamed to say, I was a vain little bee, but I found every one too busy to take notice of me. A number of young bees like myself were crawling out from their cells, and hundreds of others full-grown were flying backwards and forwards; some feeding the young grubs, others making the cells, in which I saw one laying a number of little round eggs. I soon learned that this was the Queen Bee, the mother of the hive, to whom great deference was paid. I also saw a number of bees who seemed to have nothing to do; these, I was told, were the idle bees or drones, and by and by they would all be driven out of the hive, as none but good working bees could be allowed to share the winter store. I soon began to wish to do as I saw others doing around me, and asked a bee who had just entered the hive laden with honey, which he was depositing in an empty cell, whether I could help him. His answer delighted me. done, my brave little fellow!' he said. 'Begin early to work; that's the way to make a good bee. Come with me, and you shall see how merrily we live!' Following him, we were soon outside the hive; and I shall never forget the delight I experienced when, flying through the air, I alighted first on one flower and then on another, thinking each one sweeter than the last, and rejoicing

in the warm beams of the sun. My guide allowed me to enjoy my freedom for a while; but soon buzzing up to me, he said, 'You must not go back empty, or you will be laughed at for an idle drone. See how I suck ap the honey from the bottom of the flower-cup, and try if you cannot fill your little bag before we return.' Proud to be employed, I soon learned the way; and although the delicious taste of the honey tempted me to eat a great portion of what I found, yet I managed to fill my pouch very respectably; and never was there a happier, blither little bee than I, as we flew back to our hive. Thus I lived for some time, until

I grew to be a very wise and hard-working bee.

"One morning I found all the hive in commotion. I could not at first understand what had happened, but on flying out saw a great number of my companions settled on the outside of the hive, and soon learned that the young queen, who had been nursed carefully for some time, was about to fly off and form a colony of her own. As I had been born about the same time as the queen, I thought it was my duty to follow her wherever she went; so, fastening on to the swarm which now hung like a curtain outside our old hive, I awaited the issue in patience. The sun meanwhile began to shine down with great heat, and fell upon us, as we hung motionless from the hive. In a moment the queen flew off, and we, clinging to her as we best could, rose too. There was a tinkling of a little bell, and we followed our leader until she settled on an old apple-tree; then we buzzed and wheeled about for some time, and at last gathered in a thick cluster round her. Suddenly a rough hand shook the branch on which we had alighted, and we all fell into a hive, which was quickly turned over, and we found ourselves prisoners. It was, however, a pleasant home for us, and we soon began to work in it. First we collected a sort of sticky resin, with which we carefully stopped up every hole and chink which admitted light and air; and then we began to build the cells in which our queen was to deposit her eggs. For this process a number of the working bees, amongst whom I was one, withdrew to a part of the hive, where we remained totally inactive for a long time, during which we were secreting wax in the small pockets provided for the purpose. When sufficient wax had been thus procured, the cells were formed; one by one they were built, and soon eggs were laid in some, and a certain portion of our community were appointed to watch over them, and feed the young worms when born; others, laboured unremittingly in the con-

struction of the cells, while the larger number flew abroad in quest of honey: this is my duty, and I fly far and near for the food which I bear home. Sometimes when I return laden with the sweet treasure, a tired cell-builder, who never quits the hive, petitions for a meal; then I gladly lay my burden down beside him, and fly away to gather more honey for the cell it is my task to fill. This, when full, will be covered over with wax, so that no air may get in to spoil it, and will serve for our food in the winter. now well stored, and our labour will soon end for this year. Then how sweet will be the rest after our toil, when, closely shut up in our warm home, we shall feast upon our well-earned treasure, until spring again calls us forth to new and active happiness!

"Every now and then our busy life is interrupted by some strange accident. The other day, as we were setting out in the early dawn, we saw advancing into our hive a black slimy creature, with horns on its head, and carrying on its back a sort of hive of hard, stony substance. Instantly an alarm was sounded. We flew on the monster, and darting our stings into him, he quickly drew back into his house. A hundred bees set to work in a moment, and speedily the door of his hive was covered over with the sticky resin I mentioned to you before, so that the creature could not leave his dwelling. Being thus rendered harmless, we allowed the monster to remain, for indeed our united strength could not move him an inch.

"And now, my child, I must away! The sun begins to decline, and I have not yet filled my honey-bag. Should you ever, in wandering through the wood, think of my words, remember that the bees are happy because they are usefully employed; and learn from us that daily duties, well performed, bring a sweet reward which

idle dreamers never know."

So saying the bee flew away, and the little maiden pondered on the words she had heard. After-years found her devoted to the service of all around. She still loved the birds and flowers, and often wandered through the wood; yet she never forgot that idle dreamers are, after all, but the lazy drones of the great human hive.



THE STORK.

THE Stork is a long-legged bird, with a very long beak. Its feathers are white, except its wings, which are black. Though a native of Syria, and found in the tropical regions of Africa, it comes to spend the summer in Europe. Storks migrate in numerous troops. They form a compact triangular-shaped battalion, headed by a general who directs their flight. When he is tired, one of his staff immediately replaces him, while he retires to the rear of the army. These troops occasionally extend some miles, and darken the atmosphere like a black cloud. The stork is easily tamed. The female is very careful of her young, and carries them on her wings before they are able to fly. On the other hand, the young storks provide for the nourishment of the elders when no longer able to help themselves, which accounts for the veneration in which they were held by the ancients. In our times, the stork is still respected in Syria, where it is highly useful in clearing the woods of serpents, and eating frogs and lizards. No one would think of killing these birds, who, being at peace with mankind, sleep in safety in the middle of the fields, standing on one leg, as is their custom. The superstitious Oriental considers that his house is blest if the stork has built his nest upon it, just as some of our country people welcome the swallows that become domesticated under their roof.



THE MILL IN THE SEA.

In olden times there once lived two brothers, one of whom was rich, and the other poor. When Christmas was near at hand, the poor one had not so much as a bit of meat or a crust of bread in the house, so he went to his brother, and begged him in God's name to give him a trifle. Now it happened that this was not the first time that the rich brother had given the poor one something, so he was not particularly delighted when he saw him coming.

"If you will do as I tell you," said he to the unwelcome visitor, you shall have a whole ham that is hanging up to be smoked."

The poor brother said he would do what he told him, and thank

him too.

"There it is," said the rich brother, flinging him the ham "and now go to the lower regions!"

"Since I have promised it, I must go," observed the other,

taking up his ham, and going away.

After wandering about the whole day, just as it grew dark he perceived a bright light at no great distance from him. "It must be here," thought he. On going somewhat further into the forest, however, he found an old man, with a long white beard, who was cutting wood.

"Good evening," said he with the ham.

"Good evening," replied the man; "whither may you be

going?"

"Oh! I'm only going to the lower regions, only I don't know whether I've come the right way," replied the poor, simple-hearted man.

"Yes, you are quite right," said the old man, "the entrance is just here;" and then he added, "when you have got down below, they will all want to buy your ham, for swine's flesh is a great

rarity there: but you must not sell it for money, so rather ask to exchange it against the old hand-mill that stands behind the door. When you come up again, then I will teach you what to do with the mill; for it has its use, I can tell you."

On entering the underground dwelling, every thing happened just as the old man had told him. All the imps, great and small, gathered round, and began outbidding each other for the ham.

"I had intended feasting upon it on holy Christmas eve, with my wife," said the man; "but as you seem so bent on having it, I'm willing to part with it: but I will not take any thing in exchange,

except the old hand-mill that stands behind the door."

The chief imp did not at all relish parting with this, and he began to haggle and bargain with the man; but the latter remained firm, so at last the imp was fain to let him take the mill away. When the man had emerged from the underground dwelling, he asked the old woodcutter how he was to use the mill, and when he had told him, he thanked him and returned home; but let him make what speed he would, he did not reach it till twelve o'clock at night.

"Where in the world can you have been?" said his wife as he came in. "I've been sitting here and waiting hour after hour, and I had not so much as a couple of splinters to lay across each other

under the gruel pot, to cook our Christmas dinner."

"Oh!" replied the man, "I could not come sooner, for I had some business to mind, and was obliged to go a long way about it;

but you shall see what I have brought back with me!"

He then placed the mill on the table, and made it grind first of all, candles, then a table-cloth, then food and beer,—in short, all that was wanting for a Christmas feast; and whatever he called for, the mill ground it immediately. His wife stood by, and crossed herself many times over, and was very anxious to know how her husband had come by the mill. But this he took care not to tell.

"It matters not how I got it, wife," said he: "you see that it is a good mill, whose water does not cease to flow, and that is

enough."

And then he ground eatables and drinkables, and every possible dainty for Christmas week; and on the third day he invited his friends to a banquet. When the rich brother saw what a feast was in preparation, he turned hot and cold with vexation, for he grudged his brother the least windfall.

"On Christmas eve," said he to the other guests, "he was so miserably poor that he came to ask me for a trifle in God's name,

and now all of a sudden he is as grand as if he had become an earl or a king." Then turning to his brother,—"Where on earth," asked he, "did you get all these riches?"

"Behind the door," answered the other, who had no mind to let the cat out of the bag. But towards evening, when he had taken a drop too much, he could not keep his own counsel any

longer, but brought out his mill.

"Here is the golden goose that has brought me all my riches," said he, and made the mill grind first one thing and then another. On seeing this, the brother wanted to buy the mill of him, but the other would not hear of it at first. At length, however, as his brother seemed to wish for it so very much, he said he would take three hundred dollars for it, only he bargained not to part with it till harvest-time. "For," said he, "if I keep it till then, I shall be

able to grind food enough for many a year to come."

During this space of time, we may easily imagine that the mill was not allowed to grow rusty; and when harvest-time came, the brother had it given him, only the other had taken good care not to tell him how he was to manage it. It was evening when the rich brother brought the mill home, and on the following morning he told his wife that she might go into the field with the reapers, and that he would, meanwhile, prepare the dinner. Towards midday, therefore, he placed the mill on the kitchen table. "Grind away," cried he, and let us have some herrings and a mess of milk of the best sort." So the mill began to turn out herrings and milk, till all the dishes and pots and pans were filled, and at last the kitchen was completely flooded. The man kept twisting and turning the mill, but do what he would the mill did not cease grinding, and at length the milk had risen so high that he was in danger of being drowned. He now tore open the chamber door, but it was not long before the chamber was likewise inundated; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he could wade through the milky tide and manage to unfasten the latch of the house door. No sooner had he opened the door than out he rushed, still pursued by a torrent of milk and herrings that spread over the farmyard and the meadow beyond.

Meanwhile the wife, who was out in the field with the reapers, began to think that her husband was very long in coming to call her

in to dinner.

"Let's go home," said she to the reapers; "I can readily fancy that he has not been able to manage cooking a mess of milk by himself, and so I must help him."

So they set off for the farm. But no sooner had they come

from behind the mountain, than herrings, milk, and bread, came floating towards them, while the farmer was running away at full speed. "Would that each of you had a hundred mouths to swallow all this up!" cried he: "mind you don't get drowned in my dinner."

And on he went as if a wild beast were behind him, till he had reached his brother's; and then he entreated his poor relation, for God's sake, to take back his mill: "for if it goes on grinding for another hour," said he, "the whole village will be inundated with

herrings and milk."

But the brother refused to take back the mill unless the other counted him out three hundred dollars more; and as there was no help for it, the rich man was fain to lug out the money. So now that the poor brother had money as well as the mill, he built a house that was far handsomer than the one his rich brother inhabited. With the help of the mill, he collected so much gold that he could cover the walls with plates of gold, and as the house stood near the shore, it could be seen shining from a great distance out at sea. All who sailed near that coast were sure to anchor in the neighbourhood, and to pay a visit to the rich man in the golden house, in order to see the wonderful mill.

One day, a captain, who, like so many others, had come to see the mill, inquired, after looking at it, whether it could grind salt?

"Yes, it can grind salt as well as anything," said the man.
The captain then wanted to purchase it at any price: "for," thought he, "if I had this mill, I should not be obliged to sail so far over the rough seas to fetch salt, and then I could make myself

comfortable at home."

At first the man would not hear of selling it; but the captain teazed and teazed so long, that at length he consented to part with it for many thousand dollars. As soon as the captain had obtained the mill, he took care not to remain long in the neighbourhood, for fear the man should repent of his bargain; so, without ever stopping to inquire how he was to manage the mill, he went back to his ship and sailed away. On reaching the main sea he took out his mill, and cried, "Grind salt, and let it be prime stuff!"

And the mill began to grind salt till it spit and crackled again. When the captain found that his ship was full, he tried to stop the mill, but, in spite of all his endeavours, the mill went on grinding, and the heap of salt grew higher and higher, till it finished by sinking the ship. So now the mill stands at the bottom of the ocean, and keeps grinding on to this very day, which is the reason

that sea water is salt.

THE LIME.



THE LIME.

From "The Woodland Companion," by Dr. Aikin.

The lime, or linden, is one of the beauties among trees, and is cultivated rather on that account than for its utility. It grows straight and taper, with a smooth erect trunk, and a fine spreading head inclined to a conical form. Its leaf is large, and its bark smooth. In a good soil it arrives at a great height and size, and becomes a stately object. But it is seldom viewed single, and its chief glory arises from society. No tree is so much employed for avenues, and for bordering streets and roads. Some of the straight walks of ancient limes, which modern taste has hitherto spared, are beautiful specimens of the pointed arch made by the intersection of branches, which has been supposed to be imitated in the Gothic

architecture of cathedrals. In viewing one of these noble works of nature disciplined by art, who will not exclaim with Cowper?

"Ye fallen avenues! once more I mourn
Your fate unmerited, once more rejoice
That yet a remnant of your race survives.
How airy and how light the graceful arch,
Yet awful as the consecrated roof
Re-echoing pious anthems! while beneath
The chequered earth seems restless as a flood
Brushed by the wind."—Task, b. i.

The lime comes early into leaf, and its verdure is one of the first harbingers of spring beheld in great towns, where it often decorates the squares and public walks. Its flowers are highly fragrant, and are very attractive to the bees, which gather much honey from them. An infusion of them is said to make a pleasant The sap of the tree contains sugar. Lime wood is soft and light, and, therefore, only fit for uses requiring little strength. is used by shoemakers and leather-cutters to cut leather upon, as not being liable to turn the edge of their knives. The closeness of its grain, joined with softness, and the property of not being readily attacked by the worm, has caused it to be chosen by carvers for the rich ornamental work with which churches and palaces were formerly decorated. Mr. Evelyn mentions it as the material employed by the celebrated artist Gibbon for his beautiful festoons and other sculptures. It makes good charcoal for designers. Its inner bark, soaked in water, yields a fibrous matter fit for ropes and fishingnets. The Russia mats, and the bark shoes of the peasants, are made of this material.



THE DOG'S CHRISTMAS VISIT.

AN ORIGINAL TALE, BY MADAME DE CHATELAIN.

"Papa," said little Rosa, as she was gambolling about in the garden, which looked sad and wintry now the snow was on the ground, "will it not very soon be Christmas?"

"Yes, my dear," replied her father; "what makes you in-

quire?"

"Oh," replied Rosa, "I shall be so glad to see Fanny, and Neddy, and Janet! They are coming—are they not, papa?" added she, anxiously; for, with the quick perception of childhood, she fancied her father looked half-displeased at her question.

"No, they are not coming!" said Mr. Finch, abruptly.

The word "why?" hovered on Rosa's lips, and a tear trembled in her eye, as at last she ventured to say,—

"I should have been so glad to see them! But they'll come

some other time, won't they?"

"Now, let's have no crying, Rosa!" said her father; "and don't talk to me of these Mortons any more, there's a good

girl!"

So saying, he turned off into an adjoining alley, as if to get rid of the subject; and poor little Rosa, who dared not follow him, bounded back into the house, and went with streaming eyes to ask her mother why her little companions were not coming to play with herself and brothers and sister, as they had hitherto done; for the families had regularly met every Christmas since her little life had begun, and long before it too, for the matter of that.

Mamma looked serious, as she patted her little head, and replied, "My dear, there is a quarrel between your papa and

Mr. Morton."

"What's a quarrel, mamma?" said the child.

The mother smiled. "When your little sister takes away your doll, and won't give it you back, or if one of your brothers breaks a wheel of your doll's carriage, as Tommy did yesterday, are you never angry, and do you never say unkind things to them?"

"Yes," said Rosa, blushing. "I told Tommy I would never

lend him one of my playthings again."

"And what did Tommy answer?" said the mother.

"That he didn't care!"

"And then you said he was a naughty boy, and he replied that

you were naughtier still; and if Nurse had not parted you, so you would have gone on for an hour longer, perhaps. Did not she bid you leave off quarrelling?"

"Yes, mamma," said Rosa; "but papa and Mr. Morton have

no playthings, so how can they quarrel?"

"They do not quarrel about playthings, my dear," replied her mother, "but about things suited to their age. You know you children have each a little garden of your own: now suppose Alice wanted to have a piece of your garden added to her own, you would not like it, would you?"

"Oh, no!" replied Rosa, "I have not more than I want for

myself."

"Very well," said mamma, "and I dare say you would rather have a piece of Tommy's or Fred's garden, than that Alice should have a bit of yours: is it not so?"

Rosa thought for a while, and then said, "But that would not

be fair; would it, mamma?"

"No, my love," said Mrs. Finch, kissing her, "it would not; but this is what many people do. Well, then, now imagine that, instead of a little piece of a garden, it is a large piece of land that two grown people each want to add to the land they already possess, and that one of them has contrived to buy it away from the other, can't you fancy that the one who has lost it is vexed and angry, just as you would be if your sister or brothers got away a piece of

your little garden?"

Yes, Rosa understood this quite well; and then she inquired, naturally enough, whether her father had lost or won the piece of land; and being informed that he had lost it (her mother would not tell her that it was owing to Mr. Finch's hasty temper and bitter words that the breach had been made, and that he had refused coming to an amicable agreement), she thought papa might well be vexed; only she did not see why it need prevent her from playing with her little companions. Mrs. Finch, however, endeavoured, in her mild way, to explain that the children could not come without their parents, and that it would be unpleasant to both fathers to meet after what had taken place. But here Rosa could not understand why, since Tommy and she had made it up about the coach, her father and Mr. Morton could not make up their differences about the piece of land. Only as her mamma told her that it was not to be helped, and that she must bear the disappointment as well as she could, she said no more, and went to communicate the sorrowful tidings to the rest of the little family. The Mortons were such nice children, that no disappointment could have fallen more heavily on their young playmates than to learn, thus suddenly, that the long-anticipated visit was not to take place. Alice and Tommy could not help crying; and though Fred, being a little older, bore it more soberly, still they all agreed that they would never be able to play at Christmas games, or to be merry, without their dear little friends.

On the following day, their father, after being out all the morning, brought them home some Christmas presents. Besides a cargo of dolls, and harlequins, and puzzles, that would serve as amusement for many a long winter's evening to come, he crowned the whole by bringing them a couple of starlings, to fill an empty cage that stood in a tree near the door, and that had been untenanted for at least two years, since the last inmates died. When I say cage, I don't mean a prison—for Mr. Finch would never allow his children to shut up poor little birds, who, as he often said, were "free men," just as well as we—but it was a nice, snug little abode, with a hole to creep in and out.



Only till the weather grew mild enough for them, they were to stay inside the house; for the person of whom they were bought having always kept them in a cage, they had grown so helpless

that they would not have known how to provide for themselves, for we must all learn by degrees how to make use even of liberty. Therefore, for a time only, they were to remain in their wicker cage, the door of which was never shut; so that they often came out, and picked up the crumbs at breakfast. Neither Alice nor Tommy could remember the former starlings, for they were too young at the time; but their brother and sister had often told them how amusing they were, with their knack of catching up sentences and repeating them more fluently than they could get their lessons by heart. So they had long wished to see a starling, and great indeed was their joy at papa's having guessed their wishes so exactly.

After a while, however, when they had looked at all the playthings, and fed the starlings, they recollected that they would not be able to shew them to their little friends; and they couldn't help repeating over and over again, "I wish the Mortons were coming!" So they all looked sad enough on the day before Christmas, as the family, with an additional aunt or two, were gathered together in the sitting-room. The children were playing in silence, and so quietly that Aunt Margaret declared they had never been "so good" before (goodness, in her vocabulary, consisted of making no noise); when suddenly little Rosa, who was near the window, cried out with a crow of exultation, "Why, there's Cæsar!"

To explain the delightful import these words conveyed, it must be observed that Cæsar was a trusty dog belonging to the Mortons, and that he always accompanied the family on their Christmas visit; and, being caressed and kindly treated by every body at Mr. Finch's, he invariably started off so as to arrive about a quarter of an hour before the expected guests, just as a courier precedes his master's carriage.

The rest of the children all dropped their toys to run and look out of window; and sure enough Cæsar was there, panting, and shaking the snow off his shaggy coat. A joyous scream burst from the little group, who surrounded their father, crying out, "Oh, papa, you were only playing us a trick, and they are coming after all!"

"I wish the Mortons were coming!" pertly cried the starling, who had heard the words so frequently since he had been in the house that he could repeat them exactly.

Mr. Finch looked angry, and flung his handkerchief at the

starling's cage, while he said to the children, "Have I not told you

I wouldn't hear any more about those Mortons?"

Meantime the servants had opened the door on Cæsar's scratching for admittance, and up he bounded to the drawing-room door, when Fred ran to let him in. Cæsar entered very unceremoniously, and, as if sure of a welcome, began lavishing his boisterous caresses on all present.

"Down, down, Cæsar!" said Mr. Finch, vexed at the enthusiasm with which his children welcomed their four-footed favourite; and then, touched by the unsuspecting caresses of the poor animal, he could not resist patting him, adding, "Poor fellow, it is not

his fault!"

"I wish the Mortons were coming!" again said the starling, the handkerchief having fallen down in the bustle occasioned by this unexpected visitor.

"I think, my dear," said the mother, in her quiet way, "that

the Mortons are coming to surprise us, after all."

"Oh, yes, papa," chimed in the young ones; "pray let them come."



But though the children kept watching by turns at the window, and fancying every minute they heard the sound of wheels, no

carriage drove up to the door. So it became clear that Cæsar had come entirely of his own head, as he knew nothing of the differences between the families, and cared less. And, indeed, we are bound to say that he was very hospitably treated, not only by the children but even by their father, who could not resist feeding him at dinner; and at night he went to sleep in his old quarters in an empty kennel,

that was called, emphatically, "Cæsar's house."

The following day was Christmas. The children still kept hoping that the Mortons must come, since Cæsar was there; and were romping with him much after their accustomed fashion, when the sound of the bell at the gate made them attentive. Their four little heads were in an instant all looking out of window. Could it be? No-yes-it was Mr. Morton! Mamma was giving orders in the house, and papa was in the garden on the other side of the house, and the aunts and uncles were each in their chamber, so that nobody but the children were in the sitting-room when Mr. Morton was shewn in. He had come prepared with a grave face and manner, but when the little ones gathered round him with artless joy, and he saw his dog domesticated as usual, and heard the starling crying out repeatedly, "I wish the Mortons were coming!" something very like a tear arose to his eye, and he stooped down to kiss his little welcomers, while Cæsar kept running round and round, barking and jumping on every one in turn.

The door opened, and Mr. and Mrs. Finch stood for a while

speechless as they gazed upon the group.

"Neighbour," said Mr. Morton, as soon as he could disengage himself from the eight arms twined about him, "this—this is kind of you. I confess I didn't expect you would have taught your

starling to say ---"

"I didn't teach him," said Mr. Finch, with flushed cheek, and trying to assume a distant air; "I don't know how he learnt it. But I will say, neighbour," added he, more gently, seeing that his wife was vexed at his harshness to their visitor, — "it was friendly of you to let the dog come to play with my youngsters."

"He came of himself," said Mr. Morton, smiling; "you know

animals bear no resentment."

" Nor have we shewn him any," quickly rejoined Mr. Finch.

"Well, I'm glad he came," said Mr. Morton, "if it was only to oblige me to come and fetch him, which has enabled me to see your wife and my young friends: besides, I think your starling and my dog deserved to make acquaintance with each other."

Mr. Finch was silent. Mrs. Finch pointed to a chair, begging Mr. Morton to rest after his long ride, and inquired after his wife and children. After answering her questions in the same friendly spirit as formerly, but without accepting the proffered seat, he judged it was time to put an end to so awkward a scene, and therefore said:

"Come, Cæsar — come."

But Cæsar paid no attention to the summons; and, indeed, as Tommy was riding on his back, and the others were surrounding him, he had no notion of going away just then.

"Cæsar! — Cæsar!" reiterated his master, authoritatively.

"Children, let him go!" said Mr. Finch, no less imperiously.

"L'll ride home with Mr. Morton" eried Tompy, and accounting

"I'll ride home with Mr. Morton," cried Tommy, endeavouring

to keep his seat firmly.

Mr. Finch lifted Tommy off to leave the dog unbiassed in his movements, and motioned his children not to touch him. Cæsar retreated to the rug and sat down, as much as to say to his master that he liked his quarters and did not mean to shift them just then. None of the three grown persons could help smiling. Had Cæsar been endowed with speech, he could not have manifested his resolution more intelligibly.

Mr. Finch's resentment and determination of keeping up a dignified coldness was rapidly melting, and at last he exclaimed:

"Well, then, since the mountain won't come to Mahomet, Mahomet must come to the mountain! So, neighbour, fetch your family; you see there is no resisting—the conqueror Cæsar!"

"Ha!" cried Mr. Morton, joyously extending his hand, "this will be our merriest Christmas, neighbour. Yes, I'll fetch them all. And do you know what? It is a pity a field should divide us, so let us divide the field. You shall take the half next your estate; and as you are such a famous man for drains, I am sure my portion will be the gainer by the bargain. But we'll talk of this by and by."

Mr. Finch pressed his hand silently, while little Rosa crept up

to her mother's side, and said, in a low voice:

"Was that the plaything papa and Mr. Morton were quarrelling

about?"

The harmony between the families was never again disturbed; and as long as Cæsar lived he paid his Christmas visit to his friends, whom, as all parties were pleased to acknowledge, he had been the means of reconciling to their neighbours.

THE GOLDFINCHES.

In a village in a far-distant country, the children of a peasant were perpetually teasing him to divide his property amongst them, promising at the same time to support him in ease and comfort for the rest of his days. The man put off giving any answer for two months, during which time he requested his children to pay attention to what he was about to do. He then took a nest of gold-finches, and put the young ones into a cage, which was hung outside the window. He bid his children remark how regularly the parents came to bring them food, which they thrust through the bars of the cage, and watched over them, so that they should want for nothing.

When the young ones grew old enough to take care of themselves our peasant caught the parents, and put them into the cage in the place of their children, whom he suffered to go at large. The goldfinches took such little heed of their parents that they let them die of hunger, for the cage was unprovided with food. The peasant then said to his children, who severely reprobated the ingratitude of the young birds,—"My children, you see we must never depend on the tenderness of our offspring. These little birds have just given a striking example to that effect. And remember that we, human beings, are very often even inferior to animals in

kindly feelings."

The children of this sensible man never said a word more on their favourite subject.



THE COLDERNCHES.

In a village is a far-distant country, the children of a pessant wore perpetuate accessing him to divide his property amongs them, promising at the same time to support him in case and coming for the rest of six days. The man put off giving our massion for two moviets, coming a hach time be requested his children to use attention to what he was about to do. He then took a nest of cold-backing, and put the voug ones into a care, which was him out-side the window. He hid has children trunsit how regularly the parties came to bring them tood, which they thrust through the bars of the rage, and watched once them, so that they should want has such increase.

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Boys Sliding on the Ice.

BOYS SLIDING ON THE ICE.

BY MARY ROBERTS.

What scene is more beautiful than that presented by a winter morning, when snow lies heavy on the ground, clear and sparkling? Branches meet above our heads in this quiet lane, forming a natural arcade, wherein all sounds are hushed, except when some small shivering bird hops from spray to spray, and causes the frozen particles of snow to fall with a tinkling sound on the hard ground beneath. Beside the pathway flows, silently and swiftly, a quiet stream, as if fearful of becoming frost-bound, till having reached the small mill-dam, it will dash on the restless wheels, flashing and whirling, with a slight and hazy mist. That mill-dam, with its high, dark banks, and old piles of wood, had heretofore little of beauty to commend it, but now, magnificent icicles depend from every jutting point; and sparkling trees and shrubs droop to the water's edge. And here and there, around some hole which time or the water-rat has made in the worn bank, transparent pillars cluster in their beauty, and uphold a glittering roof, beneath which a mimic grotto, fretted and embossed, reflects the colours of the rainbow, and looks as if gemmed with precious stones. The partial thaw of yesterday, succeeded by a severe frost, has produced the wondrous change.

It is pleasant to be abroad. Let us go on to Hanwell Green, with its large pond in the centre. The contiguous cottages have sent forth a joyous company, and we shall hear their merry voices as they slide upon the frozen surface. There stand the cottages with their roofs and window-sills, their pumps and palings, all white and hoary. And trees of every description, from the smallest sapling to the old memorial chestnut, beneath which men with high-crowned hats and doublets talked in the days of bluff King Harry, glitter with hoar frost.

Those boys slide well! Observe the lightness of their movements, and how at first starting the most agile slightly incline to one side, then to the other, till in a moment they shoot away with a swift and winning motion. Look at that boy! he has a basket on his head, but it seems not to concern him. How admirably he balances himself among the sliders! his erect figure and considerate face seem an earnest that he, at least, has no fear of accident. Yet

methinks, if dame Atkins, at the crockery and cake shop, was to see her truant errand-boy sliding instead of walking, she would have some anxious misgivings with regard to her basket of small wares.

Slide on, happy boys! and take your fill of gladness. You know not what hindrances beset your brethren amid the stir and hum of crowded streets, when with light hearts and glowing faces they seek to dart along the frozen surface of the ice; nor yet how stealthily they contrive to get a slide in some quiet crescent or street that turns out of the great thoroughfares, eyeing, it may be, with side-long glance, a tall policeman, who walks steadily on, looking straight before him. Perhaps he is thinking of something else, or, more probably, he has boys at home who love to slide.

But when all water-pipes are frozen, and the turncock begins to pull up his plugs, and the small temporary wooden pumps are visited by troops of serving-maidens from the neighbouring houses, with cups and buckets, gossiping and laughing, and slipping at every step, should the water that runs over and spreads between the curb-stones and carriage-way become frozen, oh, then it is joyful! Groups of urchins, no one forbidding them, slide to their hearts' content; for neither men nor horses venture on such a slippery kind of pavement. And surely, amid the stunning tide

"Of human care and crime,"

it is cheering to hear the laughs and merry voices of beings intent only on enjoyment.

Lights and shades chequer all conditions; they fall even on half-way men, and diversify the smooth surface of a well-formed slide.

Passing one day, towards evening, through a quiet suburb of London, I observed five or six boys sliding right joyfully along the footway. No policeman was in sight; no small tradesmen vending their wares from door to door; nor yet a passenger with a stout oaken staff. The snow that fell at noon, and half melted in the sun, was frozen hard, and those who were abroad trod warily beside the pavement.

Merrily went on the boys, regardless of the accidents they might occasion, and one young neighbour joined them, then another; till at length a door quietly opened, and forth came a worthy dame, carrying a shovel, with the contents of which she began to strew the pavement. "Oh, bless you, mistress, don't spoil the

slide!" cried all the boys at once. But the dame took no heed. They again sought her forbearance. All to no purpose. She did not even condescend to answer them, and her labours silently proceeded, till, instead of a long, smooth, level surface, was seen a trail of black dust and cinders. Passers-by looked on and laughed. Some even said, "Well done, mistress!" thinking, no doubt, as did that wary matron, of the accident which happened the day before, when James Saunders, the father of a large family living in a neighbouring street, fell on a similar slide and broke his leg.



PUSS AND THE CHICKENS.

Pussy, what are you about?

Let our chickies eat the bread.

Chanticleer will, I've no doubt,

Peck your eyes from out your head

If you dare attempt to steal

A chicken for your morning meal.

Therefore, pussy, run away,

And hunt for mice among the hay



THE COCK AND HEN WHO WENT A-NUTTING.

Few of our young readers but remember hearing in their childhood the story of the woman who, on coming back from market, implores the aid of so many inanimate objects, in order to attain the desired object of getting "piggy" home, till at length, probably tired out by her entreaties, "the grease began to grease the rope," &c. The following legend shews that a similar story was told to amuse little children in Norway, probably long before it became nationalised in England; which only affords another proof that popular stories are nearly identical all over Europe, only modified to suit the tastes, habits, superstitions, and peculiarities of each individual nation.

A cock and his hen once went a-nutting in a copse. The hen happened to swallow a nut-shell that stuck in her throat, and as she lay struggling and flapping her wings, the cock thought he would run and fetch some water from a neighbouring stream. So, on reaching the stream, he said, "Stream, give me some water, that I may give some water to my darling hen who is lying half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

But the stream answered: "I shall give you no water till you fetch me some leaves."

Then the cock ran to a linden-tree, and said, "Linden-tree, give me some leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall not give you any leaves till you give me a red and gold

riband," answered the linden-tree.

Then the cock ran to St. Mary, and said, "St. Mary, give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no red and gold riband," said St. Mary,

"unless you give me a pair of shoes."

So the cock ran to the shoemaker's, and said, "Shoemaker, give me a pair of shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, who will give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no shoes, unless you give me some bristles,"

answered the shoemaker.

Then the cock ran off to seek a wild boar, and said to him, "Boar, give me some bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no bristles unless you give me some corn,"

answered the boar.

So the cock ran to the thresher. "Thresher," said he, "give me some corn, that I may give the corn to the boar, that the boar may give me bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me

leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no corn unless you give me some bread," an-

swered the thresher.

Then the cock ran to the baker's, and said, "Baker, give me some bread, that I may give the bread to the thresher, that the thresher may give me corn, that I may give the corn to the boar, that the boar may give me bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no bread till you give me wood," answered

the baker.

The cock then ran to find a woodcutter, and said to him, "Woodcutter, give me wood, that I may give wood to the baker, that the baker may give me some bread, that I may give the bread to the thresher, that the thresher may give me some corn, that I may give the corn to the boar, that the boar may give me bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me some water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no wood till you give me an axe," answered

the woodcutter.

So the cock ran to the blacksmith's, and said, "Blacksmith, give me an axe, that I may give the axe to the woodcutter, that the woodcutter may give me some wood, that I may give the wood to the baker, that the baker may give me some bread, that I may give the bread to the thresher, that the thresher may give me some corn, that I may give the corn to the boar, that the boar may give me some bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me some shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the

linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

"I shall give you no axe unless you give me some coals," an-

swered the blacksmith.

Then the cock ran to find a collier, and said to him, "Collier, give me some coals, that I may give the coals to the blacksmith, that the blacksmith may give me an axe, that I may give the axe to the woodcutter, that the woodcutter may give me some wood, that I may give the wood to the baker, that the baker may give me some bread, that I may give the bread to the thresher, that the thresher may give me some corn, that I may give the corn to the boar, that the boar may give me some bristles, that I may give the bristles to the shoemaker, that the shoemaker may give me shoes, that I may give the shoes to St. Mary, that St. Mary may give me a red and gold riband, that I may give the riband to the linden-tree, that the linden-tree may give me leaves, that I may give the leaves to the stream, that the stream may give me water, that I may give the water to my darling hen who lies half dead in the hazel-nut copse."

The collier took pity on the cock, and gave him some coals. And now the blacksmith got coals, the woodcutter an axe, the baker wood, the thresher bread, the boar corn, the shoemaker bristles, St. Mary shoes, the linden-tree a red and gold riband, the stream leaves, and the cock got his water, which he gave to his darling hen who was lying half dead in the hazel-nut copse. And

the hen soon grew well again.

SWALLOWS' NESTS.

The swallow—that pretty bird with its white breast and black back, that comes every spring to take up its abode in our chimneys or in some snug corner under a projecting roof—delights in sunshine and warm weather. Indeed, swallows are quite like fair-weather friends, for no sooner come the dull days of October, bringing damp, and fog, and rain, than they begin to think of departing for a more favoured clime. One family joins another till the body of emigrants is completed; and with an experienced old swallow at their head, they then fly away to Spain or Italy, and lastly to the still warmer regions of Africa. Occasionally, on crossing the sea, they grow exhausted, and the poor tired little travellers are glad to rest

on the masts and in the rigging of vessels, and it is rare indeed when sailors either hurt them or drive them away—nay, they are generally delighted at this reminiscence of the woods and fields of their distant home. On the return of spring the little tourists again assemble and wend their way back to Europe, and such is their instinct that each knows how to find his nest, far better than we should be able to go straight to our home, supposing it situated in a country without high-roads, sign-posts, or names to its villages. The younger ones who are going to begin housekeeping then set to collecting bits of straw, feathers, horse-hair, and damp clay, which easily adheres to the angles of a building. Others build their nests between two closely-turned branches, others in the midst



of a hedge. But houses built in the Elizabethan style, with their elaborate chimneys and gable ends, afford the snuggest nooks for the little strangers, who generally become welcome guests to the inmates. Many hail them from a superstitious feeling, others from a wholesome notion of the rights of hospitality. We have known those who, when painting and embellishing their houses, would on no account allow the swallows' nests to be disturbed. From whatever cause it may spring, the feeling is a good one, and we should like to see it extended more generally to all of God's creatures. Be sure that the man who is kind to a swallow can never be a brute or a churl to his fellow-men.

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A Night on the Hills.

A NIGHT ON THE HILLS.

BY MRS. HARRIET MYRTLE.

One fine afternoon in September a party of tourists, accompanied by a guide, all in high spirits and full of enjoyment, began to make the descent of one of the highest mountains in the west of Scotland. They had lingered on the summit longer than they intended, from their delight at the splendid view; but now they began running, clambering, and sliding down in good earnest. They were four in number,—Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, and their son and daughter, Arthur and Helen. They were used to hills, for their home was in Wales; but the grandeur of the scenery here was new to them, and they often stopped to rest and admire the beautiful views, varying at every step. These rests, however, were generally cut short by their guide, who warned them that they had a long way to go, and that they ought to get back to their inn before sunset, for fear of the mist coming on.

"Do pray stop one minute more, dear mamma!" cried Helen on one of these occasions, "I want a few roots of the creeping cistus;" and she ran on among a number of broken rocks, digging up the roots with her knife, and filling her basket as she went.

Arthur, meanwhile, was taking a hasty sketch.

Helen was allured from one rock to another by the wild plants, many of them new to her, and it was not till her basket would hold no more that she set off to join the rest of the party. She ran on in the direction, as she thought, that she had come; but, turning round a point of rock where she expected to find them, she was surprised at seeing that nobody was near. She called Arthur; but received no answer. "Oh, I turned the wrong way!" she thought, and started off along another path; but she got confused among the rocks, and scarcely knew which way to take. She clambered up a high peak in hopes of seeing them; but she found that there was a deep ravine or cleft on the other side of it, and a higher peak beyond. Here she thought she heard a shout, which seemed to come from an opposite direction; but it was impossible to cross the ravine, and she tried to run along its edge and find a passage somewhere. Still she ran as fast as she could, and again turned a corner where she persuaded herself she should see them; but no, she was quite alone.

The thought that she was lost, that she was alone in this wild

place, now first occurred to her, and filled her with thrilling fear. She turned pale, and her head became giddy. The basket fell from her hand, and she sank down on the grass and gave way to a flood of tears. Then starting up, she called out for help loudly and wildly; but all in vain.

Helen was about thirteen. She was strong and active, used to exercise, and of high spirit and courage. Her mother had fostered these natural qualities, and trained her to habits of endurance and promptitude in action. She therefore was able, after the first feeling of dread had passed over her, to compose herself, and to think what it was best to do. "They will seek me in every direction," she thought. "Poor papa and Arthur, and dear mamma!"—the tears flowed afresh as she thought of them,—"and if I keep running about they may miss me constantly. I will sit quite still. It is the only thing I can do." She kept her resolution, and remained seated on a block of stone for what seemed to her a very long time, often shouting as loud as she was able, but still in vain.

A bright crimson glow now spread all around. The sun was setting. Helen rose hastily. "I must try to find the way alone," she thought. "I must wait no longer." She hurried on in a slanting direction downwards. To go straight was impossible, from the steepness. As she went it seemed to her that her eyesight began to fail. The feeling increased. Every thing grew dim. Another minute, and every thing was hidden from her view. She was enveloped in a thick mountain mist. Still she hurried nervously on, stumbled over a large stone, lost her footing, and fell

down a considerable height.

She lay for a short time stunned; but on recovering, found that she was not seriously hurt, and that some thick bush had caught her and broken her fall. It was now quite dark. She could not see her own hand as she held it before her face. She did not know whether the bush on which she rested was on level or sloping ground, or on the face of a precipice. She did not dare to move;

but the cold was so intense that she felt benumbed.

"I shall die alone in this dismal place!"—this thought arose in her. "I shall never see my dear papa and mamma, nor my darling Arthur, again!" But these names brought with them courage as well as sorrow; and the lessons of love and faith which she had received from her parents from infancy upwards came to strengthen her. "I am not alone," she thought. "He is with me, without whom a sparrow does not fall to the ground." And she repeated

to herself that fine psalm which begins, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I go up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down into the grave, behold Thou art there!" She clasped her hands and prayed for strength and help—help for herself and for the dear friends whom her heedlessness had exposed to such anguish as she knew they were enduring.

Her prayer was interrupted by the sound of many feet approaching. She listened with a beating heart. They came nearer. Something shook the branch on which she leaned. Something brushed so close by her as to touch her dress. It was a large flock of sheep, as she soon discovered by the bleating. They passed in long suc-

cession, one at a time, for many minutes.

It was certain, then, that she was close to a path wide enough to walk on. This was like deliverance from death, for she could not have borne the icy cold much longer. She rose softly as the last of the sheep passed, and followed the line closely and cautiously, clinging by one hand to what seemed a wall of rock on one side of her. After following her gentle guides in this manner for a long distance,—it seemed to her nearly a mile,—she became conscious that they spread over some open place, and began to graze. She was, therefore, obliged to stop; but she tried to keep among them, and to move her limbs continually, to keep up some warmth.

The wind now rose in gusts, and added to her distress. It blew violently at intervals, so that she could scarcely stand against it. She longed to lie down on the grass and fall asleep; but she remembered having read stories of wanderers who, having yielded

to drowsiness in great cold, never woke again.

Suddenly a ray of light from above made her raise her eyes. Oh, blessed sight! she saw the moon overhead, and in another moment she could distinguish the grass beneath her feet. The mist was driving away before the wind, and all around her was clear. To her eyes, long used to total darkness, it now seemed like broad day. Behind she could see the path by which she had come. It was a narrow ledge, cut by art or nature in the face of a precipice, the top of which towered up towards the sky, and the base of which was lost in what looked like a sea of mist. Again a silent prayer—and this time it was one of thanksgiving—filled her heart, as she saw the peril through which she had passed. She looked with a tender and grateful feeling at the sheep so quietly grazing all round her, and then walked quickly forwards, along a narrow

green valley that stretched before her, in the full hope that it

would lead to some sheep-farm or cottage.

Walking briskly on in this manner, and always down hill, she turned a jutting point of rock, and suddenly saw a bright light just in front of her, though evidently at some distance. "The inn! the inn!" she exclaimed half aloud; "they have lighted it up to guide me. I shall see them again!" She now ran. Sometimes she lost sight of the light in the windings of the path; then she saw it again. At last another point hid it from her for some minutes, and she could not help feeling afraid that it had vanished like something in a dream; but when she turned the point, there it was quite plain. But it was no inn. Helen stood still with the sudden shock. It was a cottage on fire. The flames burst from the thatched

roof and from a little window at one side.

To the first feeling of surprise succeeded one of horror. "Are there any people in that cottage?" she thought; "are they already burnt to death or still asleep?" She rushed up to the door; it was fastened. She shook it violently, and cried "Fire! — fire! Is any one here?" She was answered by loud screams and the crying of children; and in a moment the door burst open, and a woman in her night-clothes, carrying a baby, followed by two almost naked children, rushed out; but having stared wildly round, she put down the baby, and tried to go in again. This was, however, impossible. The draught of air had increased the fire, and the flames drove her back. Shrieking out many words in Gaelic (the Highland language), she ran to the back of the cottage, and with a stone broke to pieces a little window, and loudly called the names of Robert and Donald. Receiving no answer, she tried to force her way in; but the window was too small. Helen, who had closely followed her, instantly pulled off her shawl and bonnet, and trying to calm the wretched mother by a gesture, clambered up and squeezed herself through the narrow opening. The room was full of stifling smoke; but groping about, she felt the faces of two children in a corner. It was vain to shake or call them; so she dragged first one and then the other to the window, where they were received by their mother and pulled out, and Helen followed as quickly as she could. The fresh air soon recovered the two boys, who had been nearly suffocated; and when the mother saw all her children safe, she poured out earnest thanks to Helen, accompanied by many tears; and though the words were unintelligible, the feeling was clear.

This poor family had now nothing to do but to sit close together, shivering in the cold night, and watch their home burning and falling in ruins. Fortunately, the blanket that had covered the boys had been dragged out with them, and with this Helen covered up the shivering group, and seated herself close beside them, wrapped up in her shawl. The burning cottage threw out a great heat. Fatigue and hunger quite overcame her at last; and after one thought of her dear friends, and one wish that she

could but tell them "I am safe," she fell fast asleep.

She was roused by the loud barking of a dog and the voice of a man, and the whole party rising; and soon perceived that the father of the family had returned. There were hasty embraces, lamentations, rejoicings, and then she saw that she had become the subject of the story. The man came near to her, and began to thank her for all she had done in fervent language, and, to her joy, in words that she could understand. To his expressions of wonder at her appearance among them, she quickly replied by relating her adventure, and asked him to direct her to the inn where she so longed to be.

He thought for a moment, then drew from his pocket a piece of oatcake, which he bid her eat, and then running to a stream, brought her water in a wooden vessel. She pointed to the children, but he said, "Na, na; I hae mair, and ta shildren had a good supper afore they fell asleep on this awfu' nicht. Eat it a'; ye'll

need it afore ye get hame."

Helen then ate and drank what he had given her, and felt wonderfully refreshed by it. Meanwhile she saw that Donald (for so his wife called him) had pulled off his warm shepherd's plaid and wrapt it in addition over his family, and that, at a few words from him, his sagacious collie dog had stretched itself at their feet. Donald then told her he was ready to go with her.

Helen scrupled again. She said she could not bear to take him

away from his wife and children.

"And ye think I wadna gang a thousand miles wi' ye, or for ye, my leddy?—and this is but twa. I wad ha' been a lone man, wifeless and childless, but for ye. Donald will see ye safe in your mither's arms before the sun rise, so please Him who sent ye to save the wife and bairns this nicht."

Helen could say no more. She bade farewell to her late companions and set forth with him, her heart divided between the desire to be indeed in her "mother's arms," and to be able to send some help to these poor desolate fellow-beings. The path was rough, but Donald guided her with extreme care, often lifting her over difficult places. At last he begged her to let him carry her, saying she was as light as a feather. The moon had now gone down, but the first dawn of morning was visible, and Donald told her they were near

the end of their journey.

He had hardly said so before they met a man, who addressed a few words to him, and on receiving his answer, fired a pistol in the air. The sound was answered by another, and then another, at different distances. Helen perceived that these were signals of her "They hear the signal; they are out seeking me: they know I am coming," she thought. A minute more, and there was a hurried step, a stifled cry, and she was in her mother's arms.

The joy was almost too great for both; Donald had to help them into the house. Helen was soon laid on a bed, but she could take no rest nor refreshment till she had first satisfied herself that her mother had not suffered so much as to have been made ill, and that her father and Arthur would hear the signals and be sure to come soon, and that Donald's story was heard and his poor family sent for. Mrs. Edwards soon understood it all; and after giving some directions told her to sleep happily, for that warm beds and a good breakfast were preparing, and that Donald would soon be off to the hill again with two or three stout Highland ponies, loaded with cloaks and plaids, to bring them all safe to the inn. Helen smiled, and tried to go to sleep, but sleep would not come till she had seen her papa and Arthur really and truly standing by her bed.

It was late next day when she awoke. But then she heard that all had gone on well; that "the wife and bairns" were safe in the house, already comfortably clothed by contributions from the people of the inn, and the few neighbours about; and that her papa had given Donald some money, which, increased by a subscription from other visitors there, would be amply sufficient to rebuild and fur-

nish his cottage.

Helen was soon sufficiently recovered from her fatigue to proceed on her journey homewards, but she never forgot her night on the hills.

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